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THE COLLEGE CHAUCER

THE COLLEGE CHAUCER

EDITED BY

HENRY NOBLE MacCRACKEN, PH. D.

Assistant Professor of English in the Sheffield Scientific School of Yale University

[*The Glossary in collaboration with Thomas Goddard Wright, M.A. Instructor in English in Sheffield Scientific School*]

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PREFACE

The College Chaucer aims to provide, with due regard to the moderate size, attractive page, and readable print required in a modern textbook, as much of Chaucer as can be given in a single volume. The teacher will find, no doubt, more than he will choose to read with his class in any one year; but he may welcome the opportunity offered here of varying his course from year to year without change of text, and the possibilities presented of full cross-reference and helpful "outside" readings.

In this endeavor to give Chaucer *in extenso,* the editorial apparatus has been compressed within the smallest possible compass, while a glossary of greater than average fullness supplies the place of the usual notes. The Appendix contains only such additional matter as the beginner absolutely needs before attempting to read Middle English.

There is very general agreement among teachers that the student learns most by approaching Chaucer, not through a text normalized and corrected on an editorial theory as to standard mediæval spelling, but directly through the actual forms of the early and authoritative manuscripts. The one danger in this plan, of confusion in morphology and pronunciation, is greatly lessened in this edition by etymologies given in the glossary, which supply source-materials for correction of manuscript peculiarities. On the other hand, the student has not been relieved of his proper labor, by any device of friendly dots or italics. Footnotes are reserved for the indication of necessary variation from manuscript readings.

The editor gratefully thanks Professor W. W. Lawrence of Columbia University for his proposal of the plan fol-

lowed in this volume, and for his kindness in reading a part of the proof. Mr. T. G. Wright's collaboration has been of great assistance, not only in the glossarial labor, but in numerous suggestions elsewhere.

New Haven,
May, 1913

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THE COLLEGE CHAUCER

THE CANTERBURY TALES

GROUP A

PROLOGUE

Here bygynneth the Book of the tales of Caunterbury.

Whan that Aprille, with hise shoures soote,
The droghte of March hath perced to the roote
And bathed every veyne in swich licour,
Of which vertu engendred is the flour;
Whan Zephirus eek with his swete breeth
Inspired hath in every holt and heeth
The tendre croppes, and the yonge sonne
Hath in the Ram his halfe cours yronne,
And smale foweles maken melodye,
That slepen al the nyght with open eye—
So priketh hem Nature in hir corages—
Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages
And palmeres for to seken straunge strondes
To ferne halwes, kowthe in sondry londes;
And specially, from every shires ende
Of Engelond, to Caunturbury they wende,
The hooly blisful martir for to seke
That hem hath holpen, whan that they were seeke.
Bifil that in that seson, on a day,
In Southwerk at the Tabard as I lay,
Redy to wenden on my pilgrymage
To Caunterbury, with ful devout corage,
At nyght were come into that hostelrye
Wel nyne and twenty in a compaignye
Of sondry folk, by aventure yfalle

8 half.

In felaweshipe, and pilgrimes were they alle,
That toward Caunterbury wolden ryde.
The chambres and the stables weren wyde,
And wel we weren esed atte beste;
And shortly, whan the sonne was to reste,
So hadde I spoken with hem everychon
That I was of hir felaweshipe anon,
And made forward erly for to ryse
To take our wey, ther as I yow devyse.
But nathelees, whil I have tyme and space,
Er that I ferther in this tale pace,
Me thynketh it acordaunt to resoun
To telle yow al the condicioun
Of ech of hem, so as it semed me,
And whiche they weren, and of what degree,
And eek in what array that they were inne;
And at a knyght than wol I first bigynne.
A knyght ther was, and that a worthy man, Knyght
That fro the tyme that he first bigan
To riden out, he loved chivalrie,
Trouthe and honour, fredom and curteisie.
Ful worthy was he in his lordes werre,
And therto hadde he riden, no man ferre,
As wel in Cristendom as in Hethenesse,
And evere honoured for his worthynesse.
At Alisaundre he was, whan it was wonne;
Ful ofte tyme he hadde the bord bigonne
Aboven alle nacions in Pruce;
In Lettow hadde he reysed, and in Ruce,
No cristen man so ofte of his degree.
In Gernade at the seege eek hadde he be
Of Algezir, and riden in Belmarye;
At Lyeys was he, and at Satalye,
Whan they were wonne; and in the Grete See
At many a noble arive hadde he be.

40 were. 60 armee.

At mortal batailles hadde he been fiftene,
And foughten for oure feith at Tramyssene
In lystes thries, and ay slayn his foo.
This ilke worthy knyght hadde been also
Somtyme with the lord of Palatye
Agayn another hethen in Turkye,
And everemoore he hadde a sovereyn prys.
And though that he were worthy, he was wys,
And of his port as meeke as is a mayde;
He nevere yet no vileynye ne sayde
In al his lyf unto no maner wight;
He was a verray parfit gentil knyght.
But for to tellen yow of his array,
His hors weren goode, but he was nat gay.
Of fustian he wered a gypoun,
Al bismotered with his habergeoun;
For he was late ycome from his viage,
And wente for to doon his pilgrymage.
With hym ther was his sone, a yong Squier, Squier
A lovyere and a lusty bacheler,
With lokkes crulle, as they were leyd in presse.
Of twenty yeer of age he was, I gesse.
Of his stature he was of evene lengthe,
And wonderly delyvere, and of greet strengthe.
And he hadde been somtyme in chyvachie
In Flaundres, in Artoys, and Pycardie,
And born hym weel, as of so litel space,
In hope to stonden in his lady grace.
Embrouded was he, as it were a meede,
Al ful of fresshe floures whyte and reede;
Syngynge he was, or floytynge, al the day,
He was as fressh as is the monthe of May.
Short was his gowne, with sleves longe and wyde.
Wel koude he sitte on hors, and faire ryde,
He koude songes make, and wel endite,
Juste, and eek daunce, and weel purtreye and write.

So hoote he lovede, that by nyghtertale
He slepte namoore than dooth a nyghtyngale.
Curteis he was, lowely, and servysable,
And carf biforn his fader at the table.
A Yeman hadde he, and servantz namo Yeman
At that tyme, for hym liste ride soo;
And he was clad in cote and hood of grene,
A sheef of pecok arwes bright and kene
Under his belt he bar ful thriftily—
Wel koude he dresse his takel yemanly,
Hise arwes drouped noght with fetheres lowe—
And in his hand he baar a myghty bowe.
A not-heed hadde he, with a broun visage,
Of woodecraft wel koude he al the usage.
Upon his arm he baar a gay bracer,
And by his syde a swerd and a bokeler,
And on that oother syde a gay daggere,
Harneised wel, and sharpe as point of spere.
A Cristophere on his brest of silver sheene,
An horn he bar, the bawdryk was of grene.
A Forster was he, soothly, as I gesse.
Ther was also a Nonne, a Prioresse, Prioresse
That of hir smylyng was ful symple and coy.
Hir gretteste ooth was but by Seinte Loy,
And she was cleped Madame Eglentyne.
Ful weel she soong the service dyvyne,
Entuned in hir nose ful semely;
And Frenssh she spak ful faire and fetisly
After the scole of Stratford-atte-Bowe,
For Frenssh of Parys was to hir unknowe.
At mete wel ytaught was she withalle;
She leet no morsel from hir lippes falle,
Ne wette hir fyngres in hir sauce depe.
Wel koude she carie a morsel, and wel kepe
That no drope ne fille upon hir brist.

120 seint. 123 semeely.

In curteisie was set ful muche hir list;
Hire over-lippe wyped she so clene,
That in hir coppe ther was no ferthyng sene
Of grece, whan she dronken hadde hir draughte.
Ful semely after hir mete she raughte;
And sikerly, she was of greet desport,
And ful plesaunt, and amyable of port,
And peyned hir to countrefete cheere
Of court, and been estatlich of manere,
And to ben holden digne of reverence.
But for to speken of hir conscience,
She was so charitable and so pitous,
She wolde wepe, if that she saugh a mous
Kaught in a trappe, if it were deed or bledde.
Of smale houndes hadde she, that she fedde
With rosted flessh, or milk and wastel-breed.
But soore weep she if oon of hem were deed,
Or if men smoot it with a yerde smerte;
And al was conscience, and tendre herte.
Ful semyly hir wympul pynched was,
Hire nose tretys, hir eyen greye as glas,
Hir mouth ful smal, and therto softe and reed;
But sikerly, she hadde a fair forheed,
It was almoost a spanne brood, I trowe,
For, hardily, she was nat undergrowe.
Ful fetys was hir cloke, as I was war;
Of smal coral aboute hir arm she bar
A peire of bedes, gauded al with grene,
And theron heng a brooch of gold ful sheene,
On which ther was first write a crowned 'A,'
And after, 'Amor vincit omnia.'
Another Nonne with hir hadde she, Nonne & .iij. preestes
That was hire Chapeleyne, and preestes thre.
A Monk ther was, a fair for the maistrie, Monk
An outridere, that lovede venerie,

132 muchel. 140 and to. 148 wepte; *oon* any.

A manly man, to been an abbot able.
Ful many a deyntee hors hadde he in stable;
And whan he rood, men myghte his brydel heere
Gynglen in a whistlynge wynd als cleere,
And eek as loude, as dooth the chapel belle,
Ther as this lord was keper of the celle.
The reule of Seint Maure, or of Seint Beneit,
Bycause that it was old and somdel streit—
This ilke Monk leet olde thynges pace,
And heeld after the newe world the space.
He yaf nat of that text a pulled hen,
That seith that hunters beth nat hooly men,
Ne that a monk, whan he is recchelees,
Is likned til a fissh that is waterlees—
This is to seyn, a monk out of his cloystre—
But thilke text heeld he nat worth an oystre!
And I seyde his opinioun was good,
What sholde he studie, and make hymselven wood,
Upon a book in cloystre alwey to poure,
Or swynken with his handes and laboure
As Austyn bit? How shal the world be served?
Lat Austyn have his swynk to him reserved;
Therfore he was a prikasour aright,
Grehoundes he hadde, as swift as fowel in flight;
Of prikyng and of huntyng for the hare
Was al his lust, for no cost wolde he spare.
I seigh his sleves ypurfiled at the hond
With grys, and that the fyneste of a lond;
And for to festne his hood under his chyn
He hadde of gold ywroght a curious pyn;
A love-knotte in the gretter ende ther was.
His heed was balled, that shoon as any glas,
And eek his face, as it hadde been enoynt.
He was a lord ful fat and in good poynt,
Hise eyen stepe, and rollynge in his heed,

188 his owene. 196 a ful.

That stemed as a forneys of a leed;
His bootes souple, his hors in greet estaat;
Now certeinly he was a fair prelaat!
He was nat pale as a forpyned goost,
A fat swan loved he best of any roost.
His palfrey was as broun as is a berye.
A Frere ther was, a wantowne and a merye, Frere
A lymytour, a ful solempne man,
In alle the ordres foure is noon that kan
So muchel of daliaunce and fair langage.
He hadde maad ful many a mariage
Of yonge wommen at his owene cost.
Unto his ordre he was a noble post,
And wel biloved and famulier was he
With frankeleyns overal in his contree
And eek with worthy wommen of the toun,
For he hadde power of confessioun,
As seyde hymself, moore than a curat,
For of his ordre he was licenciat.
Ful swetely herde he confessioun,
And plesaunt was his absolucioun,
He was an esy man to yeve penaunce
Ther as he wiste to have a good pitaunce;
For unto a povre ordre for to yive
Is signe that a man is wel yshryve;
For, if he yaf, he dorste make avaunt,
He wiste that a man was repentaunt.
For many a man so harde is of his herte,
He may nat wepe, al thogh hym soore smerte;
Therfore, in stede of wepynge and preyeres,
Men moote yeve silver to the povre freres.
His typet was ay farsed ful of knyves
And pynnes, for to yeven yonge wyves.
And certeinly he hadde a murye note,
Wel koude he synge, and pleyen on a rote,
Of yeddynges he baar outrely the pris.

His nekke whit was as the flour delys;
Therto he strong was as a champioun,
He knew the tavernes wel in every toun
And everich hostiler and tappestere
Bet than a lazar or a beggestere.
For unto swich a worthy man as he
Acorded nat, as by his facultee,
To have with sike lazars aqueyntaunce;
It is nat honeste, it may nat avaunce,
For to deelen with no swich poraille,
But al with riche and selleres of vitaille;
And overal, ther as profit sholde arise,
Curteis he was, and lowely of servyse.
Ther nas no man nowher so vertuous;
He was the beste beggere in his hous,
(And yaf a certeyn ferme for the graunt
Noon of his brethren cam ther in his haunt;)
For thogh a wydwe hadde noght a sho,
So plesaunt was his 'In principio'
Yet wolde he have a ferthyng er he wente;
His purchas was wel bettre than his rente.
And rage he koude, as it were right a whelpe;
In love-dayes ther koude he muchel helpe;
For there he was nat lyk a cloysterer,
With a thredbare cope, as is a povre scoler,
But he was lyk a maister or a pope;
Of double worstede was his semycope,
That rounded as a belle out of the presse.
Somwhat he lipsed for his wantownesse
To make his Englissh sweete upon his tonge,
And in his harpyng, whan that he hadde songe,
Hise eyen twynkled in his heed aryght
As doon the sterres in the frosty nyght.
This worthy lymytour was cleped Huberd.
A Marchant was ther, with a forked berd, Marchaunt

240 *every* al the. *Lines 252 b, c om.* 259 cloystrer.

In mottelee, and hye on horse he sat,
Upon his heed a Flaundryssh bevere hat,
His bootes clasped faire and fetisly.
Hise resons he spak ful solempnely,
Sownynge alway thencrees of his wynnyng.
He wolde the see were kept for any thyng
Bitwixe Middelburgh and Orewelle.
Wel koude he in eschaunge sheeldes selle.
This worthy man ful wel his wit bisette;
Ther wiste no wight that he was in dette,
So estatly was he of his governaunce,
With his bargaynes and with his chevyssaunce.
Forsothe, he was a worthy man with-alle,
But, sooth to seyn, I noot how men hym calle.
A Clerk ther was of Oxenford also, Clerk of Oxenford
That unto logyk hadde longe ygo.
As leene was his hors as is a rake,
And he nas nat right fat, I·undertake,
But looked holwe and therto sobrely.
Ful thredbare was his overeste courtepy,
For he hadde geten hym yet no benefice,
Ne was so worldly for to have office,
For hym was levere have at his beddes heed
Twenty bookes, clad in blak or reed,
Of Aristotle and his philosophie,
Than robes riche, or fithele, or gay sautrie.
But al be that he was a philosophre,
Yet hadde he but litel gold in cofre;
But al that he myghte of his freendes hente,
On bookes and his lernynge he it spente,
And bisily gan for the soules preye
Of hem that yaf hym wherwith to scoleye.
Of studie took he moost cure and moost heede,
Noght o word spak he moore than was neede,
And that was seyd in forme and reverence,

272 mottee. 287 *As* And.

And short and quyk, and ful of hy sentence.
Sownynge in moral vertu was his speche,
And gladly wolde he lerne, and gladly teche.
A Sergeant of the Lawe, war and wys, Sergeant of lawe
That often hadde been at the parvys,
Ther was also, ful riche of excellence.
Discreet he was, and of greet reverence,—
He semed swich, hise wordes weren so wise.
Justice he was ful often in assise,
By patente, and by pleyn commissioun.
For his science, and for his heigh renoun,
Of fees and robes hadde he many oon.
So greet a purchasour was nowher noon,
Al was fee symple to hym in effect,
His purchasyng myghte nat been infect.
Nowher so bisy a man as he ther nas,
And yet he semed bisier than he was;
In termes hadde he caas and doomes alle,
That from the tyme of Kyng William were falle.
Therto he koude endite, and make a thyng,
Ther koude no wight pynche at his writyng.
And every statut koude he pleyn by rote.
He rood but hoomly in a medlee cote
Girt with a ceint of silk, with barres smale;—
Of his array telle I no lenger tale.
A Frankeleyn was in his compaignye; Frankeleyn
Whit was his berd as is a dayesye.
Of his complexioun he was sangwyn.
Wel loved he by the morwe a sope in wyn,
To lyven in delit was evere his wone;
For he was Epicurus owene sone,
That heeld opinioun that pleyn delit
Was verraily felicitee parfit.
An housholdere, and that a greet, was he;
Seint Julian was he in his contree.

324 yfalle. 326 pynchen. 332 *berd* heed. 338 verray.

His breed, his ale, was alweys after oon,
A bettre envyned man was nowher noon.
Withoute bake mete was nevere his hous,
Of fissh and flessh, and that so plentevous,
It snewed in his hous of mete and drynke,
Of alle deyntees that men koude thynke.
After the sondry sesons of the yeer
So chaunged he his mete and his soper.
Ful many a fat partrich hadde he in muwe,
And many a breem and many a luce in stuwe.
Wo was his cook, but if his sauce were
Poynaunt, and sharp, and redy al his geere.
His table dormant in his halle alway
Stood redy covered al the longe day.
At sessiouns ther was he lord and sire;
Ful ofte tyme he was knyght of the shire.
An anlaas and a gipser al of silk
Heeng at his girdel, whit as morne milk.
A shirreve hadde he been, and a countour,
Was nowher swich a worthy vavasour.

An Haberdasshere and a Carpenter, Haberdasshere Carpenter
A Webbe, a Dyere, and a Tapycer— Webbe Dyere
And they were clothed alle in o lyveree Tapicer
Of a solempne and a greet fraternitee.
Ful fressh and newe hir geere apiked was,
Hir knyves were chaped noght with bras,
But al with silver wroght ful clene and weel,
Hir girdles and hir pouches everydeel.
Wel semed ech of hem a fair burgeys
To sitten in a yeldehalle on a deys.
Everich for the wisdom that he kan
Was shaply for to been an alderman;
For catel hadde they ynogh, and rente,
And eek hir wyves wolde it wel assente—
And elles, certeyn, were they to blame!

342 *nowher* nevere.

It is ful fair to been ycleped 'ma Dame,'
And goon to vigilies al bifore,
And have a mantel roialliche ybore.
A Cook they hadde with hem for the nones, Cook
To boille the chiknes with the marybones,
And poudre-marchant tart, and galyngale.
Wel koude he knowe a draughte of London ale;
He koude rooste, and sethe, and broille, and frye,
Maken mortreux, and wel bake a pye.
But greet harm was it, as it thoughte me,
That on his shyne a mormal hadde he!
For blankmanger, that made he with the beste.
A Shipman was ther, wonynge fer by weste; Shipman
For aught I woot, he was of Dertemouthe.
He rood upon a rouncy, as he kouthe,
In a gowne of faldyng to the knee.
A daggere hangynge on a laas hadde he
Aboute his nekke, under his arm adoun.
The hoote somer hadde maad his hewe al broun,
And certeinly he was a good felawe.
Ful many a draughte of wyn had he ydrawe
Fro Burdeuxward, whil that the chapman sleep.
Of nyce conscience took he no keep;
If that he faught, and hadde the hyer hond,
By water he sente hem hoom to every lond.
But of his craft, to rekene wel his tydes,
His stremes, and his daungers hym bisides,
His herberwe and his moone, his lodemenage,
Ther nas noon swich from Hulle to Cartage.
Hardy he was, and wys to undertake,
With many a tempest hadde his berd been shake;
He knew alle the havenes as they were
From Gootlond to the Cape of Fynystere,
And every cryke in Britaigne and in Spayne.
His barge ycleped was the Maudelayne.

383 boille. 396 drawe.

With us ther was a Doctour of Phisik; Doctour of Phisik
In al this world ne was ther noon hym lik,
To speke of phisik and of surgerye;
For he was grounded in astronomye.
He kepte his pacient a ful greet deel
In houres, by his magyk natureel.
Wel koude he fortunen the ascendent
Of hise ymages for his pacient.
He knew the cause of everich maladye,
Were it of hoot or coold, or moyste, or drye,
And where they engendred, and of what humour.
He was a verray parfit praktisour;
The cause yknowe, and of his harm the roote,
Anon he yaf the sike man his boote.
Ful redy hadde he hise apothecaries
To sende him drogges and his letuaries,
For ech of hem made oother for to wynne,
Hir frendshipe nas nat newe to bigynne.
Wel knew he the olde Esculapius,
And Deyscorides and eek Rufus,
Olde Ypocras, Haly, and Galyen,
Serapioun, Razis, and Avycen,
Averrois, Damascien, and Constantyn,
Bernard, and Gatesden, and Gilbertyn.
Of his diete mesurable was he,
For it was of no superfluitee,
But of greet norissyng, and digestible.
His studie was but litel on the Bible.
In sangwyn and in pers he clad was al,
Lyned with taffata and with sendal—
And yet he was but esy of dispence;
He kepte that he wan in pestilence.
For gold in phisik is a cordial,
Therfore he lovede gold in special.

A good wif was ther, of biside Bathe, The goode Wif of Bathe

430 Risus.

But she was som-del deef, and that was scathe.
Of clooth-makyng she hadde swich an haunt,
She passed hem of Ypres and of Gaunt.
In al the parisshe wif ne was ther noon
That to the offrynge bifore hir sholde goon;
And if ther dide, certeyn, so wrooth was she,
That she was out of alle charitee.
Hir coverchiefs ful fyne weren of ground,
I dorste swere they weyeden ten pound
That on a Sonday weren upon hir heed.
Hir hosen weren of fyn scarlet reed,
Ful streite yteyd, and shoes ful moyste and newe.
Boold was hir face, and fair, and reed of hewe.
She was a worthy womman al hir lyve,
Housbondes at chirche-dore she hadde fyve
Withouten oother compaignye in youthe—
But therof nedeth nat to speke as nowthe.
And thries hadde she been at Jerusalem,
She hadde passed many a straunge strem,
At Rome she hadde been, and at Boloigne,
In Galice at Seint Jame, and at Coloigne,
She koude muche of wandrynge by the weye.
Gat-tothed was she, soothly for to seye.
Upon an amblere esily she sat,
Ywympled wel, and on hir heed an hat
As brood as is a bokeler or a targe,
A foot-mantel aboute hir hipes large,
And on hire feet a paire of spores sharpe.
In felaweship wel koude she laughe and carpe;
Of remedies of love she knew per-chaunce,
For she koude of that art the olde daunce.

A good man was ther of religioun,
And was a povre Persoun of a toun, Persoun of a toun
But riche he was of hooly thoght and werk.
He was also a lerned man, a clerk
That Cristes gospel trewely wolde preche.

Hise parisshens devoutly wolde he teche,
Benygne he was, and wonder diligent,
And in adversitee ful pacient,
And swich he was ypreved ofte sithes.
Ful looth were hym to cursen for hise tithes,
But rather wolde he yeven, out of doute,
Unto his povre parisshens aboute
Of his offryng and eek of his substaunce;
He koude in litel thyng have suffisaunce.
Wyd was his parisshe, and houses fer asonder,
But he ne lafte nat, for reyn ne thonder,
In siknesse nor in meschief, to visite
The ferreste in his parisshe, muche and lite,
Upon his feet, and in his hand a staf.
This noble ensample to his sheep he yaf
That firste he wroghte, and afterward he taughte—
Out of the Gospel he tho wordes caughte;
And this figure he added eek therto,
That if gold ruste, what shal iren do?
For if a preest be foul, on whom we truste,
No wonder is a lewed man to ruste,
And shame it is, if a prest take keep,
A shiten shepherde and a clene sheep!
Wel oghte a preest ensample for to yeve
By his clennesse how that his sheep sholde lyve.
He sette nat his benefice to hyre,
And leet his sheep encombred in the myre,
And ran to London, unto Seinte Poules,
To seken hym a chauntery for soules,
Or with a bretherhed to been withholde,
But dwelte at hoom, and kepte wel his folde,
So that the wolf ne made it nat myscarie.
He was a shepherde, and noght a mercenarie;
And though he hooly were and vertuous,

485 preved. 497 that he. 509 seint. 510 chauntrie. 512 dwelleth; kepeth.

He was to synful man nat despitous,
Ne of his speche daungerous ne digne,
But in his techyng discreet and benygne;
To drawen folk to hevene by fairnesse,
By good ensample, this was his bisynesse.
But it were any persone obstinat,
What so he were, of heigh or lough estat,
Hym wolde he snybben sharply for the nonys.
A bettre preest, I trowe, that nowher noon ys.
He waited after no pompe and reverence,
Ne maked him a spiced conscience,
But Cristes loore, and Hise apostles twelve
He taughte, but first he folwed it hym-selve.
With hym ther was a Plowman, was his brother, Plowman
That hadde ylad of dong ful many a fother.
A trewe swynker and a good was he,
Lyvynge in pees and parfit charitee.
God loved he best with al his hoole herte
At alle tymes, thogh him gamed or smerte,
And thanne his neighebore right as hym-selve,
He wolde thresshe, and therto dyke and delve,
For Cristes sake, for every povre wight
Withouten hire, if it lay in his myght.
Hise tithes payed he ful faire and wel,
Bothe of his propre swynk and his catel.
In a tabard he rood, upon a mere.
Ther was also a Reve and a Millere, Millere
A Somnour and a Pardoner also,
A Maunciple, and myself, ther were namo.
The Millere was a stout carl for the nones,
Ful byg he was of brawn and eek of bones—
That proved wel, for overal ther he cam
At wrastlyng he wolde have alwey the ram.
He was short-sholdred, brood, a thikke knarre,
Ther was no dore that he nolde heve of harre,

516 nat to synful. 525 waiteth. 534 he. 539 payde. 550 ne wolde.

Or breke it at a rennyng with his heed.
His berd as any sowe or fox was reed,
And therto brood, as though it were a spade.
Upon the cop right of his nose he hade
A werte, and thereon stood a toft of heres
Reed as the brustles of a sowes eres;
Hise nosethirles blake were and wyde.
A swerd and bokeler bar he by his syde.
His mouth as greet was as a greet forneys,
He was a janglere and a goliardeys,
And that was moost of synne and harlotries.
Wel koude he stelen corn, and tollen thries,
And yet he hadde a thombe of gold, pardee.
A whit cote and a blew hood wered he.
A baggepipe wel koude he blowe and sowne,
And therwithal he broghte us out of towne.

A gentil Maunciple was ther of a temple, Maunciple
Of which achatours myghte take exemple
For to be wise in byynge of vitaille;
For wheither that he payde or took by taille,
Algate he wayted so in his achaat
That he was ay biforn, and in good staat.
Now is nat that of God a ful fair grace,
That swich a lewed mannes wit shal pace
The wisdom of an heep of lerned men?
Of maistres hadde he mo than thries ten,
That weren of lawe expert and curious,
Of whiche ther weren a duszeyne in that hous
Worthy to been stywardes of rente and lond
Of any lord that is in Engelond,
To maken hym lyve by his propre good,
In honour dettelees, but if he were wood;
Or lyve as scarsly as hym list desire,
And able for to helpen al a shire
In any caas that myghte falle or happe—

558 and a.

And yet this manciple sette hir aller cappe!
The Reve was a sclendre colerik man; Reve
His berd was shave as ny as ever he kan,
His heer was by his erys ful round yshorn,
His top was dokked lyk a preest biforn.
Ful longe were his legges, and ful lene,
Ylyk a staf, ther was no calf ysene.
Wel koude he kepe a gerner and a bynne,
Ther was noon auditour koude on him wynne.
Wel wiste he, by the droghte, and by the reyn,
The yeldynge of his seed and of his greyn.
His lordes sheep, his neet, his dayerye,
His swyn, his hors, his stoor, and his pultrye,
Was hooly in this reves governyng
And by his covenant yaf the rekenyng,
Syn that his lord was twenty yeer of age;
Ther koude no man brynge hym in arrerage.
Ther nas baillif, ne hierde, nor oother hyne,
That he ne knew his sleighte and his covyne,
They were adrad of hym as of the deeth.
His wonyng was ful faire upon an heeth,
With grene trees shadwed was his place.
He koude bettre than his lord purchace.
Ful riche he was astored pryvely;
His lord wel koude he plesen subtilly
To yeve and lene hym of his owene good,
And have a thank, and yet a cote and hood.
In youthe he hadde lerned a good myster,
He was a wel good wrighte, a carpenter.
This reve sat upon a ful good stot,
That was al pomely grey, and highte Scot.
A long surcote of pers upon he hade,
And by his syde he baar a rusty blade.
Of Northfolk was this reve, of which I telle,
Bisyde a toun men clepen Baldeswelle.

590 doked. 594 *on* of. 604 *ne om.* 612 *cote* gowne.

Tukked he was, as is a frere, aboute,
And evere he rood the hyndreste of oure route.
A Somonour was ther with us in that place, Somonour
That hadde a fyr-reed cherubynnes face,
For sawcefleem he was, with eyen narwe.
As hoot he was, and lecherous, as a sparwe,
With scalled browes blake, and piled berd,
Of his visage children were aferd.
Ther nas quyk-silver, lytarge, ne brymstoon,
Boras, ceruce, ne oille of tartre noon,
Ne oynement, that wolde clense and byte,
That hym myghte helpen of his whelkes white,
Nor of the knobbes sittynge on his chekes.
Wel loved he garleek, oynons, and eek lekes,
And for to drynken strong wyn, reed as blood;
Thanne wolde he speke and crie as he were wood.
And whan that he wel dronken hadde the wyn,
Than wolde he speke no word but Latyn.
A fewe termes hadde he, two or thre,
That he had lerned out of som decree—
No wonder is, he herde it al the day,
And eek ye knowen wel how that a jay
Kan clepen 'watte' as wel as kan the Pope.
But who so koude in oother thyng hym grope,
Thanne hadde he spent al his philosophie;
Ay 'questio quid juris' wolde he crie.
He was a gentil harlot and a kynde,
A bettre felawe sholde men noght fynde;
He wolde suffre, for a quart of wyn,
A good felawe to have his concubyn
A twelf-monthe, and excuse hym atte fulle—
Ful prively a fynch eek koude he pulle.
And if he foond owher a good felawe,
He wolde techen him to have noon awe,
In swich caas, of the erchedekenes curs,

627 scaled. 632 *his* the.

But if a mannes soule were in his purs;
For in his purs he sholde ypunysshed be,
'Purs is the erchedekenes helle,' seyde he.
But wel I woot he lyed right in dede;
Of cursyng oghte ech gilty man him drede—
For curs wol slee, right as assoillyng savith—
And also war him of a Significavit.
In daunger hadde he at his owene gise
The yonge girles of the diocise,
And knew hir conseil, and was al hir reed.
A gerland hadde he set upon his heed
As greet as it were for an ale-stake;
A bokeleer hadde he maad him of a cake.
With hym ther rood a gentil Pardoner Pardoner
Of Rouncivale, his freend and his compeer,
That streight was comen fro the court of Rome.
Ful loude he soong 'com hider, love, to me.'
This Somonour bar to hym a stif burdoun,
Was nevere trompe of half so greet a soun.
This Pardoner hadde heer as yelow as wex,
But smothe it heeng as dooth a strike of flex;
By ounces henge hise lokkes that he hadde,
And therwith he hise shuldres overspradde;
But thynne it lay by colpons oon and oon.
But hood, for jolitee, wered he noon,
For it was trussed up in his walet.
Hym thoughte he rood al of the newe jet,
Dischevele, save his cappe, he rood al bare.
Swiche glarynge eyen hadde he as an hare.
A vernycle hadde he sowed upon his cappe.
His walet lay biforn hym in his lappe
Bret-ful of pardoun come from Rome al hoot.
A voys he hadde as smal as hath a goot,
No berd hadde he, ne nevere sholde have,
As smothe it was as it were late shave,

660 *him om.* 669 *rood* was. 683 dischevelee. 686 *lay om.*

I trowe he were a geldyng or a mare.
But of his craft, fro Berwyk into Ware,
Ne was ther swich another Pardoner;
For in his male he hadde a pilwe-beer,
Which that he seyde was Oure Lady veyl;
He seyde, he hadde a gobet of the seyl
That Seinte Peter hadde, whan that he wente
Upon the see, til Jesu Crist hym hente.
He hadde a croys of latoun, ful of stones,
And in a glas he hadde pigges bones;
But with thise relikes whan that he fond
A povre persoun dwellyng up-on-lond,
Upon a day he gat hym moore moneye
Than that the person gat in monthes tweye,
And thus with feyned flaterye and japes
He made the persoun and the peple his apes.
But trewely to tellen atte laste,
He was in chirche a noble ecclesiaste;
Wel koude he rede a lessoun or a storie,
But alderbest he song an offertorie,
For wel he wiste, whan that song was songe
He moste preche, and wel affile his tonge;
To wynne silver, as he ful wel koude,
Therfore he song the murierly and loude.
Now have I toold you shortly in a clause
Thestaat, tharray, the nombre, and eek the cause
Why that assembled was this compaignye
In Southwerk, at this gentil hostelrye,
That highte the Tabard, faste by the Belle.
But now is tyme to yow for to telle
How that we baren us that ilke nyght
Whan we were in that hostelrie alyght,
And after wol I telle of our viage,
And al the remenaunt of oure pilgrimage.
But first I pray yow, of youre curteisye,

697 seint. 718 *at* as.

That ye narette it nat my vileynye,
Thogh that I pleynly speke in this mateere
To telle yow hir wordes and hir cheere,
Ne thogh I speke hir wordes proprely.
For this ye knowen also wel as I,
Who-so shal telle a tale after a man,
He moot reherce as ny as evere he kan
Everich a word, if it be in his charge,
Al speke he never so rudeliche or large;
Or ellis he moot telle his tale untrewe,
Or feyne thyng, or fynde wordes newe.
He may nat spare, al thogh he were his brother,
He moot as wel seye o word as another.
Crist spak hym-self ful brode in Hooly Writ,
And, wel ye woot, no vileynye is it.
Eek Plato seith, who so kan hym rede,
The wordes moote be cosyn to the dede.
Also I prey yow to foryeve it me,
Al have I nat set folk in hir degree
Heere in this tale, as that they sholde stonde—
My wit is short, ye may wel understonde.
Greet chiere made oure hoost us everichon,
And to the soper sette he us anon.
He served us with vitaille at the beste;
Strong was the wyn, and wel to drynke us leste.
A semely man oure Hooste was withalle
For to been a marchal in an halle.
A large man he was, with eyen stepe,
A fairer burgeys was ther noon in Chepe;
Boold of his speche, and wys, and well ytaught,
And of manhod hym lakkede right naught.
Eek therto he was right a myrie man;
And after soper pleyen he bigan,
And spak of myrthe amonges othere thynges,
Whan that we hadde maad our rekenynges,

749 *He* And. 751 hoost. 756 lakked.

And seyde thus: "Now lordynges, trewely,
Ye been to me right welcome hertely,
For by my trouthe, if that I shal nat lye,
I saugh nat this yeer so myrie a compaignye
Atones in this herberwe, as is now.
Fayn wolde I doon yow myrthe, wiste I how—
And of a myrthe I am right now bythoght
To doon yow ese, and it shal coste noght.
Ye goon to Caunterbury, God yow speede—
The blisful martir quite yow youre meede—
And wel I woot, as ye goon by the weye,
Ye shapen yow to talen and to pleye,
For trewely, confort ne myrthe is noon
To ride by the weye doumb as stoon,
And therfore wol I maken yow disport,
As I seyde erst, and doon yow som confort;
And if yow liketh alle by oon assent
For to stonden at my juggement,
And for to werken as I shal yow seye,
To-morwe, whan ye riden by the weye,
Now, by my fader soule that is deed,
But ye be myrie I wol yeve yow myn heed!
Hoold up youre hond, withouten moore speche."
Oure conseil was nat longe for to seche—
Us thoughte it was noght worth to make it wys—
And graunted hym, withouten moore avys,
And bad him seye his voirdit, as hym leste.
"Lordynges," quod he, "now herkneth for the beste,
But taak it nought, I prey yow, in desdeyn.
This is the poynt, to speken short and pleyn,
That ech of yow, to shorte with oure weye,
In this viage shal telle tales tweye,
To Caunterburyward I mene it so,
And homward he shal tellen othere two,
Of aventures that whilom han bifalle.

774 as the. 782 But if.

And which of yow that bereth hym best of alle—
That is to seyn, that telleth in this caas
Tales of best sentence and moost solaas—
Shal have a soper at oure aller cost,
Heere in this place, sittynge by this post,
Whan that we come agayn fro Caunterbury.
And for to make yow the moore mury
I wol my-selven goodly with yow ryde
Right at myn owene cost, and be youre gyde.
And who so wole my juggement withseye
Shal paye al that we spenden by the weye.
And if ye vouchesauf that it be so,
Tel me anon, withouten wordes mo,
And I wol erly shape me therfore."
This thyng was graunted, and oure othes swore
With ful glad herte, and preyden hym also
That he wolde vouchesauf for to do so,
And that he wolde been oure governour,
And of our tales juge and reportour,
And sette a soper at a certeyn pris,
And we wol reuled been at his devys
In heigh and lough; and thus by oon assent
We been acorded to his juggement;
And therupon the wyn was fet anon,
We dronken, and to reste wente echon
Withouten any lenger taryynge.
  Amorwe, whan that day bigan to sprynge,
Up roos oure Hoost, and was oure aller cok,
And gadrede us togidre, alle in a flok,
And forth we riden, a litel moore than paas,
Unto the wateryng of Seint Thomas.
And there oure Hoost bigan his hors areste,
And seyde, "Lordynges, herkneth if yow leste,
Ye woot youre foreward, and I it yow recorde;
If even-song and morwe-song accorde,

822 gan. 829 *I om.*

Lat se now who shal telle the firste tale.
As evere mote I drynke wyn or ale,
Whoso be rebel to my juggement
Shal paye for al that by the wey is spent.
Now draweth cut, er that we ferrer twynne,
He which that hath the shorteste shal bigynne.
Sire knyght," quod he, "my mayster and my lord,
Now draweth cut, for that is myn accord,
Cometh neer," quod he, "my lady Prioresse,
And ye, Sir Clerk, lat be your shamefastnesse,
Ne studieth noght; ley hond to, every man."
Anon to drawen every wight bigan,
And shortly for to tellen as it was,
Were it by aventure, or sort, or cas,
The sothe is this, the cut fil to the knyght,
Of which ful blithe and glad was every wyght.
And telle he moste his tale, as was resoun,
By foreward and by composicioun,—
As ye han herd, what nedeth wordes mo?
And whan this goode man saugh that it was so,
As he that wys was and obedient
To kepe his foreward by his free assent,
He seyde, "Syn I shal bigynne the game,
What, welcome be the cut, a Goddes name!
Now lat us ryde, and herkneth what I seye."
And with that word we ryden forth oure weye,
And he bigan with right a myrie cheere
His tale anon, and seyde in this manere.

850 An.

THE KNYGHTES TALE.

Iamque domos patrias Scithice post aspera gentis prelia laurigero &c. Thebaïd, xii, 519.

Heere bigynneth the knyghtes tale.

Whilom, as olde stories tellen us,
Ther was a duc that highte Theseus;
Of Atthenes he was lord and governour,
And in his tyme swich a conquerour,
That gretter was ther noon under the sonne.
Ful many a riche contree hadde he wonne,
What with his wysdom and his chivalrie;
He conquered al the regne of Femenye,
That whilom was ycleped Scithia,
And weddede the queene Ypolita,
And broghte hir hoom with hym in his contree,
With muchel glorie and greet solempnytee,
And eek hir yonge suster Emelye.
And thus with victorie and with melodye
Lete I this noble duk to Atthenes ryde,
And al his hoost, in armes hym bisyde.
And certes, if it nere to long to heere,
I wolde have toold yow fully the manere
How wonnen was the regne of Femenye
By Theseus, and by his chivalrye,
And of the grete bataille for the nones
Bitwixen Atthenes and Amazones,
And how asseged was Ypolita
The faire hardy queene of Scithia,
And of the feste that was at hir weddynge,
And of the tempest at hir hoom-comynge;
But al that thyng I moot as now forbere,

868 wedded. 871 *yonge* faire. 876 yow have told.

I have, God woot, a large feeld to ere,
And wayke been the ooxen in my plough,
The remenant of the tale is long ynough.
I wol nat letten eek noon of this route,
Lat every felawe telle his tale aboute,
And lat se now who shal the soper wynne;—
And ther I lefte, I wol ayeyn bigynne.
This duc of whom I make mencioun,
Whan he was come almoost unto the toun,
In al his wele and in his mooste pride,
He was war, as he caste his eye aside,
Where that ther kneled in the hye weye
A compaignye of ladyes, tweye and tweye,
Ech after oother, clad in clothes blake;
But swich a cry and swich a wo they make,
That in this world nys creature lyvynge
That herde swich another waymentynge!
And of this cry they nolde nevere stenten,
Til they the reynes of his brydel henten.
"What folk been ye, that at myn hom-comynge
Perturben so my feste with criynge?"
Quod Theseus, "have ye so greet envye
Of myn honour, that thus compleyne and crye?
Or who hath yow mysboden or offended?
And telleth me if it may been amended,
And why that ye been clothed thus in blak?"
The eldeste lady of hem alle spak—
Whan she hadde swowned with a deedly cheere,
That it was routhe for to seen and heere—
And seyde, "Lord to whom Fortune hath yeven
Victorie, and as a conqueror to lyven,
Nat greveth us youre glorie and youre honour,
But we biseken mercy and socour.
Have mercy on oure wo and oure distresse,
Som drope of pitee thurgh thy gentillesse

897 *hye om.*

Upon us wrecched wommen lat thou falle;
For certes, lord, ther is noon of us alle
That she ne hath been a duchesse or a queene.
Now be we caytyves, as it is wel seene—
Thanked be Fortune, and hir false wheel,
That noon estat assureth to be weel.
And certes, lord, to abyden youre presence,
Heere in the temple of the goddesse Clemence
We han ben waitynge al this fourtenyght;
Now help us, lord, sith it is in thy myght!
I wrecche, which that wepe and waille thus,
Was whilom wyf to kyng Cappaneus,
That starf at Thebes, cursed be that day!
And alle we that been in this array
And maken al this lamentacioun,
We losten alle oure housbondes at that toun,
Whil that the seege theraboute lay.
And yet now the olde Creon, weylaway!
That lord is now of Thebes the Citee,
Fulfild of ire and of iniquitee,
He, for despit and for his tirannye,
To do the dede bodyes vileynye,
Of alle oure lordes, whiche that been slawe,
He hath alle the bodyes on an heep ydrawe,
And wol nat suffren hem, by noon assent,
Neither to been yburyed nor ybrent,
But maketh houndes ete hem in despit."
And with that word, withouten moore respit,
They fillen gruf, and criden pitously,
"Have on us wrecched wommen som mercy
And lat oure sorwe synken in thyn herte."
This gentil duk doun from his courser sterte
With herte pitous, whan he herde hem speke;
Hym thoughte that his herte wolde breke,
Whan he saugh hem so pitous and so maat,

931 *waille* crie.

That whilom weren of so greet estaat.
And in his armes he hem alle up hente,
And hem conforteth in ful good entente,
And swoor his ooth, as he was trewe knyght,
He wolde doon so ferforthly his myght
Upon the tiraunt Creon hem to wreke,
That all the peple of Grece sholde speke
How Creon was of Theseus yserved,
As he that hadde his deeth ful wel deserved.
And right anoon, withouten moore abood,
His baner he desplayeth, and forth rood
To Thebesward, and al his hoost biside,
No neer Atthenes wolde he go ne ride,
Ne take his ese fully half a day,
But onward on his wey that nyght he lay—
And sente anon Ypolita the queene,
And Emelye, hir yonge suster sheene,
Unto the toun of Atthenes to dwelle—
And forth he rit; ther is namoore to telle.
The rede statue of Mars, with spere and targe,
So shyneth, in his white baner large,
That alle the feeldes gliteren up and doun,
And by his baner born is his penoun
Of gold ful riche, in which ther was ybete
The Mynotaur which that he slough in Crete.
Thus rit this duc, thus rit this conquerour,
And in his hoost of chivalrie the flour,
Til that he cam to Thebes, and alighte
Faire in a feeld, ther as he thoughte fighte.
But shortly for to speken of this thyng,
With Creon, which that was of Thebes kyng,
He faught, and slough hym manly as a knyght
In pleyn bataille, and putte the folk to flyght,
And by assaut he wan the citee after,
And rente adoun bothe wall, and sparre, and rafter.
And to the ladyes he restored agayn

The bones of hir housbondes that weren slayn,
To doon obsequies as was tho the gyse.
But it were al to longe for to devyse
The grete clamour and the waymentynge
That the ladyes made at the brennynge
Of the bodies, and the grete honour
That Theseus, the noble conquerour,
Dooth to the ladyes, whan they from hym wente;
But shortly for to telle is myn entente.

Whan that this worthy duc, this Theseus,
Hath Creon slayn, and wonne Thebes thus,
Stille in that feeld he took al nyght his reste
And dide with al the contree as hym leste.
To ransake in the taas of bodyes dede,
Hem for to strepe of harneys and of wede,
The pilours diden bisynesse and cure,
After the bataille and disconfiture;
And so bifel, that in the taas they founde
Thurgh-girt with many a grevous blody wounde,
Two yonge knyghtes liggynge by and by,
Bothe in oon armes wroght ful richely,
Of whiche two Arcita highte that oon,
And that oother knyght highte Palamon.
Nat fully quyke, ne fully dede they were,
But by here cote-armures, and by hir gere,
The heraudes knewe hem best, in special,
As they that weren of the blood roial
Of Thebes, and of sustren two yborn.
Out of the taas the pilours han hem torn,
And han hem caried softe unto the tente
Of Theseus, and he ful soone hem sente
To Atthenes to dwellen in prisoun
Perpetuelly, he nolde no raunsoun.
And whan this worthy duc hath thus ydon,
He took his hoost, and hoom he rood anon,

1005 of the. 1022 he hem.

With laurer crowned, as a conquerour,
And ther he lyveth in joye and in honour
Terme of his lyve, what nedeth wordes mo?
And in a tour, in angwissh and in wo,
Dwellen this Palamon and eek Arcite
For evermoore, ther may no gold hem quite.
This passeth yeer by yeer, and day by day,
Till it fil ones, in a morwe of May,
That Emelye, that fairer was to sene
Than is the lylie upon his stalke grene,
And fressher than the May with floures newe—
For with the rose colour stroof hir hewe,
I noot which was the fairer of hem two—
Er it were day, as was hir wone to do,
She was arisen, and al redy dight—
For May wole have no slogardrie a-nyght;
The sesoun priketh every gentil herte,
And maketh hym out of his slepe to sterte,
And seith, 'arys and do thyn observaunce,'
This maked Emelye have remembraunce
To doon honour to May, and for to ryse.
Yclothed was she fressh, for to devyse,
Hir yelow heer was broyded in a tresse,
Bihynde hir bak, a yerde long, I gesse,
And in the gardyn, at the sonne upriste,
She walketh up and doun, and as hir liste
She gadereth floures, party white and rede,
To make a subtil gerland for hir hede,
And as an aungel hevenysshly she soong.
The grete tour, that was so thikke and stroong,
Which of the castel was the chief dongeoun,
Ther as the knyghtes weren in prisoun,
Of whiche I tolde yow, and tellen shal,
Was evene joynant to the gardyn wal
Ther as this Emelye hadde hir pleyynge.

1029 *his om.* 1031 *Dwellen om.; eek* his felawe. 1039 fyner.

Bright was the sonne, and cleer that morwenynge,
And Palamoun, this woful prisoner,
As was his wone, by leve of his gayler,
Was risen, and romed in a chambre on heigh,
In which he al the noble citee seigh,
And eek the gardyn, ful of braunches grene,
Ther as this fresshe Emelye the shene
Was in hire walk, and romed up and doun.
This sorweful prisoner, this Palamoun,
Goth in the chambre romynge to and fro,
And to hym-self compleynynge of his wo.
That he was born, ful ofte he seyde, 'allas!'
And so bifel, by aventure or cas,
That thurgh a wyndow, thikke of many a barre
Of iren greet, and square as any sparre,
He cast his eye upon Emelya,
And therwithal he bleynte, and cryede "A!"
As though he stongen were unto the herte.
And with that cry Arcite anon upsterte
And seyde, "Cosyn myn, what eyleth thee,
That art so pale and deedly on to see?
Why cridestow? who hath thee doon offence?
For Goddess love, taak al in pacience
Oure prisoun, for it may noon oother be;
Fortune hath yeven us this adversitee.
Som wikke aspect or disposicioun
Of Saturne by sum constellacioun
Hath yeven us this, al though we hadde it sworn.
So stood the hevene, whan that we were born.
We moste endure it, this the short and playn."
This Palamon answerde and seyde agayn,
"Cosyn, for sothe, of this opinioun
Thow hast a veyn ymaginacioun.
This prison caused me nat for to crye,
But I was hurt right now thurgh-out myn eye

1063 And this. 1065 *on* an. 1078 cride.

Into myn herte, that wol my bane be.
The fairnesse of that lady, that I see
Yond in the gardyn romen to and fro,
Is cause of al my criyng and my wo.
I noot wher she be womman or goddesse,
But Venus is it, soothly as I gesse."
And therwithal, on knees doun he fil,
And seyde, "Venus, if it be thy wil,
Yow in this gardyn thus to transfigure
Bifore me, sorweful wrecche creature,
Out of this prisoun helpe that we may scapen!
And if so be my destynee be shapen
By eterne word to dyen in prisoun,
Of oure lynage have som compassioun,
That is so lowe ybroght by tirannye."
And with that word Arcite gan espye
Wher-as this lady romed to and fro,
And with that sighte hir beautee hurte hym so,
That if that Palamon was wounded sore,
Arcite is hurt as moche as he, or moore.
And with a sigh he seyde pitously,
"The fresshe beautee sleeth me sodeynly
Of hir, that rometh in the yonder place!
And but I have hir mercy and hir grace
That I may seen hir atte leeste weye,
I nam but deed, ther is namoore to seye."
This Palamon, whan he tho wordes herde,
Dispitously he looked and answerde,
"Wheither seistow this in ernest or in pley?"
"Nay," quod Arcite, "in ernest by my fey,
God helpe me so, me list ful yvele pleye."
This Palamon gan knytte his browes tweye;
"It nere," quod he, "to thee no greet honour
For to be fals, ne for to be traitour
To me, that am thy cosyn and thy brother,

1115 *was om.*

Ysworn ful depe, and ech of us til oother,
That nevere for to dyen in the peyne,
Til that the deeth departe shal us tweyne,
Neither of us in love to hyndre other,
Ne in noon oother cas, my leeve brother,
But that thou sholdest trewely forthren me
In every cas, as I shal forthren thee.
This was thyn ooth, and myn also certeyn,
I woot right wel thou darst it nat withseyn,
Thus artow of my conseil, out of doute;
And now thou woldest falsly been aboute
To love my lady, whom I love and serve
And evere shal, til that myn herte sterve.
Nay, certes, false Arcite, thow shalt nat so!
I loved hir first, and tolde thee my wo
As to my conseil, and to my brother sworn,
To forthre me as I have toold biforn,
For which thou art ybounden as a knyght
To helpen me, if it lay in thy myght,
Or elles artow fals, I dar wel seyn."
This Arcite ful proudly spak ageyn,
"Thow shalt," quod he, "be rather fals than I.
But thou art fals, I telle thee outrely,
For paramour I loved hir first er thow.
What, wiltow seyn thou wistest nat yet now
Wheither she be a womman or goddesse?
Thyn is affeccioun of hoolynesse,
And myn is love as to a creature;
For which I tolde thee myn aventure
As to my cosyn and my brother sworn.
I pose, that thow lovedest hir biforn;
Wostow nat wel the olde clerkes sawe
That 'who shal yeve a lovere any lawe?'
Love is a gretter lawe, by my pan,
Than may be yeve of any erthely man.

1154 *But* And

And therfore positif lawe and swich decree
Is broken al day for love in ech degree.
A man moot nedes love, maugree his heed,
He may nat fleen it, thogh he sholde be deed,
Al be she mayde, or wydwe, or elles wyf.
And eek it is nat likly, al thy lyf,
To stonden in hir grace, namoore shal I,
For wel thou woost thyselven, verraily,
That thou and I be dampned to prisoun
Perpetuelly, us gayneth no raunsoun.
We stryven as dide the houndes for the boon,
They foughte al day, and yet hir part was noon.
Ther cam a kyte, whil they weren so wrothe,
And baar awey the boon bitwixe hem bothe.
And therfore at the kynges court, my brother,
Ech man for hymself, ther is noon oother.
Love if thee list, for I love, and ay shal;
And soothly, leeve brother, this is al.
Heere in this prisoun moote we endure,
And everich of us take his aventure."

Greet was the strif and long bitwix hem tweye,
If that I hadde leyser for to seye—
But to theffect; it happed on a day,
To telle it yow as shortly as I may,
A worthy duc, that highte Perotheus,
That felawe was unto duc Theseus
Syn thilke day that they were children lite,
Was come to Atthenes his felawe to visite,
And for to pleye as he was wont to do—
For in this world he loved no man so,
And he loved hym als tendrely agayn.
So wel they lovede, as olde bookes sayn,
That whan that oon was deed, soothly to telle,
His felawe wente and soughte hym doun in helle.
But of that storie list me nat to write;

1192 *unto* to. 1195 won.

Duc Perotheus loved wel Arcite,
And hadde hym knowe at Thebes yeer by yere,
And finally, at requeste and preyere
Of Perotheus, withouten any raunsoun
Duc Theseus hym leet out of prisoun
Frely to goon, wher that hym liste overal,
In swich a gyse as I you tellen shal.
This was the forward, pleynly for tendite,
Bitwixen Theseus and hym Arcite,
That if so were that Arcite were yfounde
Evere in his lif, by day or nyght or stounde,
In any contree of this Theseus,
And he were caught, it was acorded thus,
That with a swerd he sholde lese his heed;
Ther nas noon oother remedie ne reed,
But taketh his leve and homward he him spedde;
Lat hym be war, his nekke lith to wedde!
How greet a sorwe suffreth now Arcite!
The deeth he feeleth thurgh his herte smyte,
He wepeth, wayleth, crieth pitously,
To sleen hymself he waiteth prively.
He seyde, "Allas, that day that he was born!
Now is my prisoun worse than biforn;
Now is me shape eternally to dwelle
Nat in purgatorie but in helle.
Allas, that evere knew I Perotheus!
For elles hadde I dwelled with Theseus,
Yfetered in his prisoun evermo;
Thanne hadde I been in blisse, and nat in wo.
Oonly the sighte of hire whom that I serve,
Though that I nevere hir grace may deserve,
Wolde han suffised right ynough for me.
O deere cosyn Palamon," quod he,
"Thyn is the victorie of this aventure.
Ful blisfully in prison maistow dure.—

1226 in my.

In prisoun? certes, nay, but in Paradys!
Wel hath Fortune yturned thee the dys,
That hast the sighte of hir, and I thabsence;
For possible is, syn thou hast hir presence,
And art a knyght, a worthy and an able,
That by som cas, syn Fortune is chaungeable,
Thow maist to thy desir som tyme atteyne.
But I, that am exiled and bareyne
Of alle grace, and in so greet dispeir
That ther nys erthe, water, fir, ne eir,
Ne creature, that of hem maked is,
That may me heelp, or doon confort in this,
Wel oughte I sterve in wanhope and distresse,
Farwel, my lif, my lust, and my gladnesse!
Allas, why pleynen folk so in commune
On purveyaunce of God or of Fortune,
That yeveth hem ful ofte in many a gyse
Wel bettre than they kan hem-self devyse?
Som man desireth for to han richesse,
That cause is of his moerdre or greet siknesse.
And som man wolde out of his prisoun fayn,
That in his hous is of his meynee slayn.
Infinite harmes been in this mateere,
We witen nat what thing we preyen here.
We faren as he that dronke is as a mous;
A dronke man woot wel he hath an hous,
But he noot which the righte wey is thider,
And to a dronke man the wey is slider.
And certes, in this world so faren we;
We seken faste after felicitee,
But we goon wrong ful often trewely.
Thus may we seyen alle, and namely I,
That wende and hadde a greet opinioun
That if I myghte escapen from prisoun,
Thanne hadde I been in joye and perfit heele,

1252 puruieaunce. 1260 *thing om.* 1262 that he. 1268 seyn.

Ther now I am exiled fro my wele.
Syn that I may nat seen you, Emelye,
I nam but deed, ther nys no remedye."
Upon that oother syde, Palamon,
Whan that he wiste Arcite was agon,
Swich sorwe he maketh, that the grete tour
Resouneth of his youlyng and clamour.
The pure fettres on his shynes grete
Weren of his bittre salte teeres wete.
"Allas," quod he, "Arcite, cosyn myn!
Of al oure strif, God woot, the fruyt is thyn.
Thow walkest now in Thebes at thy large,
And of my wo thow yevest litel charge.
Thou mayst, syn thou hast wysdom and manhede,
Assemblen alle the folk of oure kynrede,
And make a werre so sharp on this citee,
That by som aventure, or som tretee,
Thow mayst have hir to lady and to wyf,
For whom that I moste nedes lese my lyf.
For as by wey of possibilitee,
Sith thou art at thy large of prisoun free,
And art a lord, greet is thyn avauntage
Moore than is myn, that sterve here in a cage.
For I moot wepe and wayle, whil I lyve,
With al the wo that prison may me yeve,
And eek with peyne that love me yeveth also,
That doubleth al my torment and my wo."
Therwith the fyr of jalousie up-sterte
Withinne his brest, and hente him by the herte
So woodly, that he lyk was to biholde
The boxtree, or the asshen dede and colde.
Thanne seyde he, "O cruel goddes, that governe
This world with byndyng of youre word eterne,
And writen in the table of atthamaunt
Youre parlement and youre eterne graunt,

1272 *Ther* That. 1278 Resouned.

What is mankynde moore unto you holde
Than is the sheep that rouketh in the folde?
For slayn is man right as another beeste,
And dwelleth eek in prison and arreeste,
And hath siknesse, and greet adversitee,
And ofte tymes giltelees, pardee!
What governance is in this prescience
That giltelees tormenteth innocence?
And yet encresseth this al my penaunce,
That man is bounden to his observaunce,
For Goddes sake, to letten of his wille,
Ther as a beest may al his lust fulfille.
And whan a beest is deed, he hath no peyne,
But man after his deeth moot wepe and pleyne,
Though in this world he have care and wo.
Withouten doute it may stonden so.
The answere of this lete I to dyvynys,
But well I woot, that in this world greet pyne ys.
Allas, I se a serpent or a theef,
That many a trewe man hath doon mescheef,
Goon at his large, and where hym list may turne!
But I moot been in prisoun thurgh Saturne,
And eek thurgh Juno, jalous and eek wood,
That hath destroyed wel ny al the blood
Of Thebes, with hise waste walles wyde.
And Venus sleeth me on that oother syde
For jalousie and fere of hym Arcite."
Now wol I stynte of Palamon a lite,
And lete hym in his prisoun stille dwelle,
And of Arcita forth I wol yow telle.
The somer passeth, and the nyghtes longe
Encressen double wise the peynes stronge
Bothe of the lovere and the prisoner;
I noot which hath the wofuller mester.

1309 beest. 1310 arreest. 1312, 1314, giltlees. 1320 man moot.
1337 *somer* sonne.

For shortly for to seyn, this Palamoun
Perpetuelly is dampned to prisoun
In cheynes and in fettres to been deed,
And Arcite is exiled upon his heed
For evere mo as out of that contree,
Ne nevere mo he shal his lady see.
Yow loveres axe I now this questioun,
Who hath the worse, Arcite or Palamoun?
That oon may seen his lady day by day,
But in prison he moot dwelle alway;
That oother wher hym list may ride or go,
But seen his lady shal he nevere mo.
Now demeth as yow liste ye that kan,
For I wol telle forth, as I bigan.

Explicit prima pars.

Sequitur pars secunda.

Whan that Arcite to Thebes comen was,
Ful ofte a day he swelte and seyde 'allas,'
For seen his lady shal he nevere mo;
And shortly to concluden al his wo,
So muche sorwe hadde nevere creature,
That is, or shal, whil that the world may dure.
His sleep, his mete, his drynke is hym biraft,
That lene he wex and drye as is a shaft.
Hise eyen holwe and grisly to biholde,
His hewe falow and pale as asshen colde;
And solitarie he was and evere allone
And waillynge al the nyght, makynge his mone.
And if he herde song or instrument,
Thanne wolde he wepe, he myghte nat be stent.
So feble eek were hise spiritz, and so lowe,
And chaunged so, that no man koude knowe

1353 list. 1362 wexeth.

His speche nor his voys, though men it herde.
And in his geere for al the world he ferde
Nat oonly lik the loveris maladye
Of Hereos, but rather lyk manye
Engendred of humour malencolik
Biforen in his celle fantastik,
And shortly turned was al up-so-doun
Bothe habit and eek disposicioun
Of hym, this woful lovere daun Arcite.
What sholde I al day of his wo endite?
Whan he endured hadde a yeer or two
This crueel torment, and this peyne and woo,
At Thebes in his contree, as I seyde,
Upon a nyght in sleep as he hym leyde,
Hym thoughte how that the wynged god Mercurie
Biforn hym stood, and bad hym to be murie.
His slepy yerde in hond he bar uprighte,
An hat he werede upon hise heris brighte.
Arrayed was this god, as he took keep,
As he was whan that Argus took his sleep;
And seyde hym thus, "To Atthenes shaltou wende,
Ther is thee shapen of thy wo an ende."
And with that word Arcite wook and sterte.
"Now trewely, how soore that me smerte,"
Quod he, "to Atthenes right now wol I fare,
Ne for the drede of deeth shal I nat spare
To se my lady that I love and serve,
In hir presence I recche nat to sterve."
And with that word he caughte a greet mirour,
And saugh that chaunged was al his colour,
And saugh his visage al in another kynde.
And right anon it ran hym in his mynde,
That sith his face was so disfigured
Of maladye, the which he hadde endured,
He myghte wel, if that he bar hym lowe,

1376 Biforn his owene. 1388 up. 1389 *he* I.

Lyve in Atthenes, everemoore unknowe,
And seen his lady wel ny day by day.
And right anon he chaunged his array,
And cladde hym as a povre laborer,
And al allone, save oonly a squier
That knew his privetee and al his cas,
Which was disgised povrely, as he was,
To Atthenes is he goon, the nexte way.
And to the court he wente, upon a day,
And at the gate he profreth his servyse,
To drugge and drawe, what so men wol devyse.
And shortly of this matere for to seyn,
He fil in office with a chamberleyn,
The which that dwellynge was with Emelye,
For he was wys and koude soone espye
Of every servant which that serveth here.
Wel koude he hewen wode, and water bere,
For he was yong and myghty for the nones,
And therto he was strong and big of bones
To doon that any wight kan hym devyse.
A yeer or two he was in this servyse
Page of the chambre of Emelye the brighte;
And Philostrate he seyde that he highte.
But half so wel biloved a man as he
Ne was ther nevere in court, of his degree;
He was so gentil of condicioun
That thurghout al the court was his renoun.
They seyden, that it were a charitee,
That Theseus wolde enhaunsen his degree,
And putten hym in worshipful servyse
Ther as he myghte his vertu exercise.
And thus withinne a while his name is spronge
Bothe of hise dedes and his goode tonge,
That Theseus hath taken hym so neer
That of his chambre he made hym a Squier,

1424 *strong* long.

And gaf hym gold to mayntene his degree.
And eek men broghte hym out of his contree
From yeer to yeer, ful pryvely, his rente.
But honestly and slyly he it spente,
That no man wondred how that he it hadde.
And thre yeer in this wise his lif he ladde,
And bar hym so in pees, and eek in werre,
Ther was no man that Theseus hath derre.
And in this blisse lete I now Arcite,
And speke I wole of Palamon a lite.
In derknesse and horrible and strong prisoun
Thise seven yeer hath seten Palamoun,
Forpyned, what for wo and for distresse.
Who feeleth double soor and hevynesse
But Palamon, that love destreyneth so,
That wood out of his wit he goth for wo?
And eek therto he is a prisoner,
Perpetuelly, noght oonly for a yer.
Who koude ryme in Englyssh proprely
His martirdom? Forsothe it am nat I,
Therfore I passe as lightly as I may.
It fel that in the seventhe yer, in May,
The thridde nyght, as olde bookes seyn,
That al this storie tellen moore pleyn,
Were it by aventure or destynee—
As, whan a thyng is shapen, it shal be—
That soone after the mydnyght, Palamoun
By helpyng of a freend, brak his prisoun
And fleeth the citee faste as he may go;
For he hade yeve his gayler drynke so
Of a clarree maad of a certeyn wyn,
With nercotikes and opie of Thebes fyn,
That al that nyght, thogh that men wolde him shake,
The gayler sleep, he myghte nat awake.
And thus he fleeth as faste as evere he may;

1472 *With* Of.

The nyght was short and faste by the day,
That nedes-cost he moot hymselven hyde;
And til a grove, faste ther bisyde,
With dredeful foot thanne stalketh Palamoun.
For shortly this was his opinioun,
That in that grove he wolde hym hyde al day,
And in the nyght thanne wolde he take his way
To Thebesward, his freendes for to preye
On Theseus to helpe hym to werreye;
And shortly, outher he wolde lese his lif,
Or wynnen Emelye unto his wyf;
This is theffect and his entente pleyn.
Now wol I turne to Arcite ageyn,
That litel wiste how ny that was his care
Til that Fortune had broght him in the snare.
The bisy larke, messager of day,
Salueth in hir song the morwe gray,
And firy Phebus riseth up so brighte
That al the orient laugheth of the lighte,
And with hise stremes dryeth in the greves
The silver dropes hangynge on the leves;
And Arcita, that is in the court roial
With Theseus, his squier principal,
Is risen, and looketh on the myrie day.
And for to doon his observaunce to May,
Remembrynge on the poynt of his desir
He on a courser startlynge as the fir
Is riden into the feeldes, hym to pleye,
Out of the court, were it a myle or tweye.
And to the grove of which that I yow tolde
By aventure his wey he gan to holde,
To maken hym a gerland of the greves,
Were it of wodebynde or hawethorn-leves.
And loude he song ayeyn the sonne shene,
"May, with alle thy floures and thy grene,
Welcome be thou, faire fresshe May,

In hope that I som grene gete may."
And from his courser, with a lusty herte,
Into a grove ful hastily he sterte,
And in a path he rometh up and doun
Ther as by aventure this Palamoun
Was in a bussh, that no man myghte hym se;
For soore afered of his deeth was he.
No thyng ne knew he that it was Arcite,
God woot, he wolde have trowed it ful lite!
But sooth is seyd, gon sithen many yeres,
That feeld hath eyen and the wode hath eres.
It is ful fair a man to bere hym evene,
For al day meeteth men at unset stevene.
Ful litel woot Arcite of his felawe,
That was so ny to herknen al his sawe,
For in the bussh he sitteth now ful stille.
  Whan that Arcite, hadde romed al his fille
And songen al the roundel lustily,
Into a studie he fil al sodeynly,
As doon thise loveres in hir queynte geres,
Now in the croppe, now doun in the breres,
Now up, now doun, as boket in a welle.
Right as the Friday, soothly for to telle,
Now it shyneth, now it reyneth faste,
Right so kan geery Venus overcaste
The hertes of hir folk; right as hir day
Is gereful, right so chaungeth she array.
Selde is the Friday al the wowke ylike.
Whan that Arcite had songe, he gan to sike,
And sette hym doun withouten any moore;
"Allas," quod he, "that day that I was bore!
How longe, Juno, thurgh thy crueltee
Woltow werreyen Thebes the Citee?
Allas, ybroght is to confusioun
The blood roial of Cadme and Amphioun!

1518 aferd; thanne was. 1521 go. 1532 crope.

Of Cadmus, which that was the firste man
That Thebes bulte, or first the toun bigan,
And of the citee first was crouned kyng.
Of his lynage am I, and his ofspryng,
By verray ligne, as of the stok roial,
And now I am so caytyf and so thral
That he that is my mortal enemy
I serve hym as his squier povrely.
And yet dooth Juno me wel moore shame,
For I dar noght biknowe myn owene name,
But theras I was wont to highte Arcite,
Now highte I Philostrate, noght worth a myte.
Allas, thou felle Mars! allas, Juno!
Thus hath youre ire oure kynrede al fordo,
Save oonly me, and wrecched Palamoun
That Theseus martireth in prisoun.
And over al this, to sleen me outrely,
Love hath his firy dart so brennyngly
Ystiked thurgh my trewe careful herte,
That shapen was my deeth erst than my sherte.
Ye sleen me with youre eyen, Emelye,
Ye been the cause wherfore that I dye.
Of al the remenant of myn oother care
Ne sette I nat the montance of a tare,
So that I koude doon aught to youre plesaunce."
And with that word he fil doun in a traunce
A longe tyme, and after he upsterte.
This Palamoun, that thoughte that thurgh his herte
He felte a coold swerd sodeynliche glyde,
For ire he quook, no lenger wolde he byde.
And whan that he had herd Arcites tale,
As he were wood, with face deed and pale,
He stirte hym up out of the buskes thikke,
And seide, "Arcite, false traytour wikke!
Now artow hent that lovest my lady so,
For whom that I have al this peyne and wo,

And art my blood, and to my conseil sworn,
As I ful ofte have seyd thee heer-biforn,
And hast byjaped heere duc Theseus,
And falsly chaunged hast thy name thus.
I wol be deed, or elles thou shalt dye;
Thou shalt nat love my lady Emelye,
But I wol love hire oonly, and namo,
For I am Palamon, thy mortal foo!
And though that I no wepene have in this·place,
But out of prison am astert by grace,
I drede noght that outher thow shalt dye,
Or thow ne shalt nat loven Emelye.
Chees which thou wolt, for thou shalt nat asterte!"
This Arcite, with ful despitous herte,
Whan he hym knew, and hadde his tale herd,
As fiers as leoun pulled out his swerd,
And seyde thus: "By God that sit above,
Nere it that thou art sik and wood for love,
And eek that thow no wępne hast in this place,
Thou sholdest nevere out of this grove pace,
That thou ne sholdest dyen of myn hond.
For I defye the seurete and the bond
Which that thou seist that I have maad to thee.
What, verray fool, thynk wel that love is free!
And I wol love hir, maugree al thy myght!
But for as muche thou art a worthy knyght,
And wilnest to darreyne hire by bataille,
Have heer my trouthe; tomorwe I wol nat faille
Withoute wityng of any oother wight
That heere I wol be founden as a knyght,
And bryngen harneys right ynough for thee,
And chese the beste, and leve the worste for me.
And mete and drynke this nyght wol I brynge
Ynough for thee, and clothes for thy beddynge;
And if so be that thou my lady wynne,
And sle me in this wode ther I am inne,

Thow mayst wel have thy lady as for me."
This Palamon answerde, "I graunte it thee."
And thus they been departed til amorwe,
Whan ech of hem had leyd his feith to borwe.
O Cupide, out of alle charitee!
O regne, that wolt no felawe have with thee!
Ful sooth is seyd that love ne lordshipe
Wol noght, hir thankes, have no felaweshipe.
Wel fynden that Arcite and Palamoun:
Arcite is riden anon unto the toun,
And on the morwe, er it were dayes light,
Ful prively two harneys hath he dight,
Bothe suffisaunt and mete to darreyne
The bataille in the feeld bitwix hem tweyne.
And on his hors, allone as he was born,
He carieth al this harneys hym biforn,
And in the grove, at tyme and place yset,
This Arcite and this Palamon ben met.
Tho chaungen gan the colour in hir face
Right as the hunters in the regne of Trace,
That stondeth at the gappe with a spere,
Whan hunted is the leoun and the bere,
And hereth hym come russhyng in the greves,
And breketh bothe bowes and the leves,
And thynketh, "Heere cometh my mortal enemy,
Withoute faille he moot be deed or I,
For outher I moot sleen hym at the gappe,
Or he moot sleen me, if that me myshappe"—
So ferden they in chaungyng of hir hewe,
As fer as everich of hem oother knewe.
Ther nas no good day ne no saluyng,
But streight withouten word or rehersyng,
Everich of hem heelp for to armen oother,
As freendly as he were his owene brother.
And after that with sharpe speres stronge

1634 *this* the. 1637 *Tho* To. 1652 freenly.

They foynen ech at oother wonder longe.
Thou myghtest wene that this Palamoun
In his fightyng were a wood leoun,
And as a crueel tigre was Arcite.
As wilde bores gonne they to smyte,
That frothen white as foom for ire wood.
Up to the ancle foghte they in hir blood;
And in this wise I lete hem fightyng dwelle,
And forth I wole of Theseus yow telle.
The destinee, ministre general,
That executeth in the world overal
The purveiaunce that God hath seyn biforn,
So strong it is, that though the world had sworn
The contrarie of a thyng, by ye or nay,
Yet somtyme it shal fallen on a day
That falleth nat eft withinne a thousand yeere.
For certeinly, oure appetites heere,
Be it of werre, or pees, or hate, or love,
Al is this reuled by the sighte above.
This mene I now by myghty Theseus,
That for to hunten is so desirus
And namely at the grete hert in May,
That in his bed ther daweth hym no day
That he nys clad, and redy for to ryde
With hunte and horn, and houndes hym bisyde.
For in his huntyng hath he swich delit
That it is al his joye and appetit
To been hymself the grete hertes bane—
For after Mars he serveth now Dyane.
Cleer was the day, as I have toold er this,
And Theseus, with alle joye and blis,
With his Ypolita, the faire quene,
And Emelye, clothed al in grene,
On huntyng be they riden roially,
And to the grove, that stood ful faste by,
In which ther was an hert, as men hym tolde,

Duc Theseus the streighte wey hath holde,
And to the launde he rideth hym ful right,
For thider was the hert wont have his flight,
And over a brook, and so forth in his weye.
This duc wol han a cours at hym, or tweye,
With houndes swiche as that hym list comaunde.
And whan this duc was come unto the launde,
Under the sonne he looketh, and anon
He was war of Arcite and Palamon,
That foughten breme, as it were bores two;
The brighte swerdes wenten to and fro
So hidously, that with the leeste strook
It semed as it wolde felle an ook;
But what they were, nothyng he ne woot.
This duc his courser with his spores smoot,
And at a stert he was bitwix hem two,
And pulled out a swerd, and cride, "Hoo!
Namoore, up peyne of lesynge of youre heed!
By myghty Mars, he shal anon be deed
That smyteth any strook, that I may seen!
But telleth me what myster men ye been,
That been so hardy for to fighten heere.
Withouten juge or oother officere,
As it were in a lystes roially?"
This Palamon answerde hastily,
And seyde, "Sire, what nedeth wordes mo?
We have the deeth disserved, bothe two.
Two woful wrecches been we, two caytyves,
That been encombred of oure owene lyves,
And as thou art a rightful lord and juge,
Ne yeve us neither mercy ne refuge,
But sle me first for seinte charitee;
But sle my felawe eek as wel as me—
Or sle hym first, for, though thow knowest it lite,
This is thy mortal foo, this is Arcite,

1702 fille. 1707 upon. 1710 mystiers.

That fro thy lond is banysshed on his heed,
For which he hath deserved to be deed.
For this is he, that cam unto thy gate,
And seyde that he highte Philostrate.
Thus hath he japed thee ful many a yer,
And thou hast maked hym thy chief Squier,
And this is he that loveth Emelye.
For sith the day is come that I shal dye,
I make pleynly my confessioun
That I am thilke woful Palamoun,
That hath thy prisoun broken wikkedly.
I am thy mortal foo, and it am I
That loveth so hoote Emelye the brighte,
That I wol dye present in hir sighte;
Wherfore I axe deeth and my juwise—
But sle my felawe in the same wise
For bothe han we deserved to be slayn."
This worthy duc answerde anon agayn,
And seyde, "This is a short conclusioun,
Youre owene mouth, by your confessioun,
Hath dampned yow, and I wol it recorde.
It nedeth noght to pyne yow with the corde,
Ye shal be deed, by myghty Mars the rede!"
The queene anon, for verray wommanhede,
Gan for to wepe, and so dide Emelye,
And alle the ladyes in the compaignye.
Greet pitee was it, as it thoughte hem alle,
That evere swich a chaunce sholde falle.
For gentilmen they were of greet estaat,
And no thyng but for love was this debaat,
And saugh hir blody woundes wyde and soore,
And alle crieden, bothe lasse and moore,
"Have mercy, lord, upon us wommen alle!"
And on hir bare knees adoun they falle,
And wolde have kist his feet ther as he stood;
Til at the laste aslaked was his mood,

For pitee renneth soone in gentil herte.
And though he first for ire quook and sterte,
He hath considered shortly in a clause
The trespas of hem bothe, and eek the cause,
And although that his ire hir gilt accused,
Yet in his resoun he hem bothe excused.
As thus, he thoghte wel, that every man
Wol helpe hym-self in love, if that he kan,
And eek delivere hym-self out of prisoun;
And eek his herte hadde compassioun
Of wommen, for they wepen evere in oon.
And in his gentil herte he thoughte anon,
And softe unto hym-self he seyde, "Fy
Upon a lord that wol have no mercy,
But been a leoun, bothe in word and dede,
To hem that been in repentaunce and drede,
As wel as to a proud despitous man,
That wol maynteyne that he first bigan!
That lord hath litel of discrecioun
That in swich cas kan no divisioun,
But weyeth pride and humblesse after oon."
And shortly, whan his ire is thus agoon,
He gan to looken up with eyen lighte,
And spak thise same wordes al on highte:
"The God of love, A! benedicite!
How myghty and how greet a lord is he!
Ayeyns his myght ther gayneth none obstacles,
He may be cleped a god for hise myracles,
For he kan maken at his owene gyse
Of everich herte as that hym list divyse.
Lo heere, this Arcite and this Palamoun
That quitly weren out of my prisoun,
And myghte han lyved in Thebes roially,
And witen I am hir mortal enemy,
And that hir deth lith in my myght also;

1767 *As* And.

And yet hath love, maugree hir eyen two,
Ybroght hem hyder bothe for to dye!
Now looketh, is nat that an heigh folye?
Who may been a fole, but if he love?
Bihoold, for Goddes sake that sit above,
Se how they blede! Be they noght wel arrayed?
Thus hath hir lord, the God of Love, ypayed
Hir wages and hir fees for hir servyse!
And yet they wenen for to been ful wyse,
That serven love, for aught that may bifalle!
But this is yet the beste game of alle,
That she, for whom they han this jolitee,
Kan hem therfore as muche thank, as me!
She woot namoore of al this hoote fare,
By God, than woot a cokkow or an hare!
But all moot ben assayed, hoot and coold;
A man moot ben a fool, or yong or oold;
I woot it by myself ful yore agon,
For in my tyme a servant was I oon.
And therfore, syn I knowe of loves peyne,
And woot how soore it kan a man distreyne,
As he that hath ben caught ofte in his laas,
I yow foryeve al hoolly this trespaas,
At requeste of the queene that kneleth heere,
And eek of Emelye, my suster deere.
And ye shul bothe anon unto me swere,
That nevere mo ye shal my contree dere,
Ne make werre upon me, nyght ne day,
But been my freendes in al that ye may,
I yow foryeve this trespas, every deel."
And they hym sworen his axyng, faire and weel,
And hym of lordship and of mercy preyde,
And he hem graunteth grace, and thus he seyde:
"To speke of roial lynage and richesse,
Though that she were a queene or a princesse,

1810 *or* of.

Ech of you bothe is worthy doutelees
To wedden whan tyme is, but nathelees
I speke as for my suster Emelye,
For whom ye have this strif and jalousye:
Ye woot yourself, she may nat wedden two
Atones, though ye fighten everemo!
That oon of you, al be hym looth or lief,
He moot go pipen in an yvy-leef—
This is to seyn, she may nat now han bothe,
Al be ye never so jalouse, ne so wrothe.
And forthy, I yow putte in this degree;
That ech of yow shal have his destynee
As hym is shape, and herkneth in what wyse;
Lo, heere your ende of that I shal devyse.
My wyl is this, for plat conclusioun,
Withouten any repplicacioun,
If that you liketh, take it for the beste,
That everich of you shal goon where hym leste,
Frely, withouten raunson, or daunger,
And this day fifty wykes fer ne ner,
Everich of you shal brynge an hundred knyghtes
Armed for lystes up at alle rightes,
Al redy to darreyne hire by bataille.
And this bihote I yow withouten faille,
Upon my trouthe, and as I am a knyght,
That wheither of yow bothe that hath myght,
This is to seyn, that wheither he, or thow,
May with his hundred, as I spak of now,
Sleen his contrarie, or out of lystes dryve,
Thanne shal I yeve Emelya to wyve,
To whom that Fortune yeveth so fair a grace.
Tho lystes shal I maken in this place,
And God so wisly on my soule rewe,
As I shal evene juge been, and trewe.
Ye shul noon oother ende with me maken,

1832 *but nathelees* doutelees. 1838 *go om.*

That oon of yow ne shal be deed or taken.
And if yow thynketh this is weel ysayd,
Seyeth youre avys and holdeth you apayd;
This is youre ende and youre conclusioun."
Who looketh lightly now but Palamoun?
Who spryngeth up for joye but Arcite?
Who kouthe tellen, or who kouthe endite
The joye that is maked in the place,
Whan Theseus hath doon so fair a grace?
But doun on knees wente every maner wight,
And thonken hym with al hir herte and myght,
And namely the Thebans, often sithe.
And thus with good hope and with herte blithe
They taken hir leve, and homward gonne they ride
To Thebes with hise olde walles wyde.

Explicit secunda pars

Sequitur pars tercia

I trowe men wolde deme it necligence,
If I foryete to tellen the dispence
Of Theseus, that gooth so bisily
To maken up the lystes roially;
That swich a noble theatre as it was,
I dar wel seyen, in this world ther nas.
The circuit a myle was aboute,
Walled of stoon, and dyched al withoute.
Round was the shap, in manere of compas,
Ful of degrees the heighte of sixty pas,
That whan a man was set on o degree,
He lette nat his felawe for to see.
Estward ther stood a gate of marbul whit,
Westward, right swich another in the opposit;
And shortly to concluden, swich a place
Was noon in erthe, as in so litel space.

1886 seyn.

For in the lond ther was no crafty man
That geometrie or ars-metrik kan,
Ne portreitour, ne kervere of ymages,
That Theseus ne yaf him mete and wages
The theatre for to maken and devyse.
And for to doon his ryte and sacrifise
He estward hath upon the gate above,
In worship of Venus, goddesse of love,
Doon make an auter and an oratorie.
And on the gate westward, in memorie
Of Mars, he maked hath right swich another,
That coste largely of gold a fother.
And northward, in a touret on the wal
Of alabastre whit, and reed coral,
An oratorie, riche for to see,
In worship of Dyane, of chastitee,
Hath Theseus doon wroght in noble wyse.
But yet hadde I foryeten to devyse
The noble kervyng and the portreitures,
The shap, the contenaunce, and the figures,
That weren in thise oratories thre.
First in the temple of Venus maystow se
Wroght on the wal, ful pitous to biholde,
The broken slepes and the sikes colde,
The sacred teeris and the waymentynge,
The firy strokes, and the desirynge
That loves servauntz in this lyf enduren;
The othes that her covenantz assuren;
Plesaunce and Hope, Desir, Foolhardynesse,
Beautee and Youthe, Bauderie, Richesse,
Charmes and Force, Lesynges, Flaterye,
Despense, Bisynesse, and Jalousye,
That wered of yelewe goldes a gerland,
And a cokkow sittynge on hir hand;
Festes, instrumentz, caroles, daunces,

1900 *him om.* 1906 *gate om.*

Lust and array, and alle the circumstaunces
Of love, whiche that I rekned, and rekne shal,
By ordre weren peynted on the wal,
And mo than I kan make of mencioun;
For soothly, al the mount of Citheroun,
Ther Venus hath hir principal dwellynge,
Was shewed on the wal in portreyynge,
With al the gardyn and the lustynesse.
Nat was foryeten the Porter Ydelnesse,
Ne Narcisus the faire, of yore agon,
Ne yet the folye of kyng Salamon,
And eek the grete strengthe of Ercules,
Thenchauntementz of Medea and Circes,
Ne of Turnus, with the hardy fiers corage,
The riche Cresus, kaytyf in servage;
Thus may ye seen, that wysdom ne richesse,
Beautee ne sleighte, strengthe, hardynesse,
Ne may with Venus holde champartie,
For as hir list, the world than may she gye.
Lo, alle thise folk so caught were in hir las,
Til they for wo ful ofte seyde 'allas!'
Suffiseth heere ensamples oon or two—
And, though, I koude rekene a thousand mo.
The statue of Venus, glorious for to se,
Was naked, fletynge in the large see,
And fro the navele doun al covered was
With wawes grene, and brighte as any glas.
A citole in hir right hand hadde she,
And on hir heed, ful semely for to se,
A rose gerland, fressh and wel smellynge;
Above hir heed hir dowves flikerynge.
Biforn hir stood hir sone, Cupido,
Upon his shuldres wynges hadde he two,
And blynd he was, as it was often seene.
A bowe he bar, and arwes brighte and kene.

1933 have and. 1942 *Ne* And.

Why sholde I noght as wel eek telle yow al
The portreiture, that was upon the wal
Withinne the temple of myghty Mars the rede?
Al peynted was the wal in lengthe and brede
Lyk to the estres of the grisly place
That highte the grete temple of Mars in Trace,
In thilke colde frosty regioun
Ther as Mars hath his sovereyn mansioun.
First on the wal was peynted a forest
In which ther dwelleth neither man ne best,
With knotty knarry bareyne trees olde,
Of stubbes sharpe and hidouse to biholde,
In which ther ran a rumbel and a swough
As though a storm sholde bresten every bough.
And dounward from an hille, under a bente,
Ther stood the temple of Mars Armypotente,
Wroght al of burned steel, of which the entree
Was long and streit, and gastly for to see,
And therout came a rage and suche a veze,
That it made al the gate for to rese.
The northren lyght in at the dores shoon,
For wyndowe on the wal ne was ther noon,
Thurgh which men myghten any light discerne.
The dore was al of adamant eterne,
Yclenched overthwart and endelong
With iren tough, and for to make it strong
Every pyler, the temple to sustene,
Was tonne-greet of iren bright and shene.
Ther saugh I first the dirke ymaginyng
Of felonye, and al the compassyng,
The crueel ire, reed as any gleede,
The pykepurs, and eek the pale drede,
The smyler with the knyfe under the cloke,
The shepne brennynge with the blake smoke,
The tresoun of the mordrynge in the bedde,

1996 *al om.* 1998 *eek om.*

The open werre, with woundes al bibledde,
Contek, with blody knyf and sharp manace,
Al ful of chirkyng was that sory place.
The sleer of hymself yet saugh I ther,
His herte-blood hath bathed al his heer;
The nayl ydryven in the shode a nyght,
The colde deeth, with mouth gapyng upright.
Amyddes of the temple sat Meschaunce,
With Disconfort and Sory Contenaunce.
Yet saugh I Woodnesse laughynge in his rage,
Armed Compleint, Outhees, and fiers Outrage;
The careyne in the busk with throte ycorve,
A thousand slayn, and nat of qualm ystorve,
The tiraunt with the pray by force yraft,
The toun destroyed, ther was nothyng laft.
Yet saugh I brent the shippes hoppesteres,
The hunte strangled with the wilde beres,
The sowe freten the child right in the cradel,
The cook yscalded, for al his longe ladel.
Noght was foryeten by the infortune of Marte,
The cartere over-ryden with his carte,
Under the wheel ful lowe he lay adoun.
Ther were also, of Martes divisioun,
The barbour, and the bocher, and the smyth
That forgeth sharpe swerdes on his styth.
And al above, depeynted in a tour,
Saugh I Conquest sittynge in greet honour,
With the sharpe swerd over his heed
Hangynge by a soutil twyned threed.
Depeynted was the slaughtre of Julius,
Of grete Nero, and of Antonius;
Al be that thilke tyme they were unborn,
Yet was hir deth depeynted therbiforn
By manasynge of Mars, right by figure;
So was it shewed in that portreiture,

2014 nat oon. 2025 *barbour* laborer 2030 twynes.

As is depeynted in the sterres above
Who shal be slayn or elles deed for love.
Suffiseth oon ensample in stories olde,
I may nat rekene hem alle though I wolde.
  The statue of Mars upon a carte stood
Armed, and looked grym as he were wood,
And over his heed ther shynen two figures
Of sterres, that been cleped in scriptures
That oon Puella, that oother Rubeus.
This god of armes was arrayed thus:
A wolf ther stood biforn hym at his feet,
With eyen rede, and of a man he eet.
With soutil pencel was depeynt this storie,
In redoutynge of Mars and of his glorie.
  Now to the temple of Dyane the chaste
As shortly as I kan I wol me haste,
To telle yow al the descripsioun.
Depeynted been the walles up and doun
Of huntyng and of shamefast chastitee.
Ther saugh I, how woful Calistopee
Whan that Diane agreved was with here,
Was turned from a womman til a bere,
And after was she maad the loode-sterre;—
Thus was it peynted, I kan sey yow no ferre—
Hir sone is eek a sterre, as men may see.
Ther saugh I Dane, yturned til a tree,
I mene nat the goddesse Diane,
But Penneus doughter which that highte Dane.
Ther saugh I Attheon an hert ymaked,
For vengeaunce that he saugh Diane al naked.
I saugh how that hise houndes have hym caught
And freeten hym, for that they knewe hym naught.
Yet peynted was a litel forthermoor
How Atthalante hunted the wilde boor,
And Meleagree, and many another mo,

2037 *sterres* certres. 2049 depeynted. 2069 *was om.*

For which Dyane wroghte hym care and wo.
Ther saugh I many another wonder storie,
The whiche me list nat drawen to memorie.
This goddesse on an hert ful hye seet,
With smale houndes al aboute hir feet;
And undernethe hir feet she hadde a moone,
Wexynge it was, and sholde wanye soone.
In gaude grene hir statue clothed was,
With bowe in honde, and arwes in a cas.
Hir eyen caste she ful lowe adoun,
Ther Pluto hath his derke regioun.
A womman travaillynge was hir biforn;
But for hir child so longe was unborn
Ful pitously Lucyna gan she calle,
And seyde, "Help, for thou mayst best of alle!"
Wel koude he peynten lyfly, that it wroghte,
With many a floryn he the hewes boghte.
Now been thise listes maad, and Theseus,
That at his grete cost arrayed thus
The temples, and the theatre every deel,
Whan it was doon, hym lyked wonder weel.—
But stynte I wole of Theseus a lite,
And speke of Palamon and of Arcite.
The day approcheth of hir retournynge,
That everich sholde an hundred knyghtes brynge
The bataille to darreyne, as I yow tolde.
And til Atthenes, hir covenantz for to holde,
Hath everich of hem broght an hundred knyghtes,
Wel armed for the werre at alle rightes.
And sikerly, ther trowed many a man,
That nevere sithen that the world bigan,
As for to speke of knyghthod of hir hond,
As fer as God hath maked see or lond,
Nas of so fewe so noble a compaignye.
For every wight that lovede chivalrye,

2075 ful wel. 2089 *thise* the.

And wolde, his thankes, han a passant name,
Hath preyed that he myghte been of that game;
And wel was hym that therto chosen was.
For if ther fille tomorwe swich a cas
Ye knowen wel, that every lusty knyght
That loveth paramours, and hath his myght,
Were it in Engelond or elles where,
They wolde, hir thankes, wilnen to be there,
To fighte for a lady, benedicitee!
It were a lusty sighte for to see.
And right so ferden they with Palamon,
With hym ther wenten knyghtes many on.
Som wol ben armed in an haubergeoun,
In a bristplate, and in a light gypoun,
And somme woln have a paire plates large,
And somme woln have a Pruce sheeld, or a targe,
Somme woln ben armed on hir legges weel,
And have an ax, and somme a mace of steel.
Ther is no newe gyse, that it nas old;
Armed were they, as I have yow told,
Everych after his opinioun.
Ther maistow seen comyng with Palamoun
Lygurge hym-self, the grete kyng of Trace.
Blak was his berd, and manly was his face,
The cercles of hise eyen in his heed,
They gloweden bitwyxen yelow and reed,
And lik a griffon looked he aboute,
With kempe heeris on hise browes stoute,
Hise lymes grete, hise brawnes harde and stronge,
Hise shuldres brode, hise armes rounde and longe;
And as the gyse was in his contree,
Ful hye upon a chaar of gold stood he,
With foure white boles in the trays.
In stede of cote-armure, over his harnays
With nayles yelewe and brighte as any gold

2108 preyd. 2120 *a om.* 2133 grifphon.

He hadde a beres skyn, colblak, for-old;
His longe heer was kembd bihynde his bak,
As any ravenes fethere it shoon for-blak.
A wrethe of gold arm-greet, of huge wighte,
Upon his heed, set ful of stones brighte,
Of fyne rubyes and of dyamauntz.
Aboute his chaar ther wenten white alauntz,
Twenty and mo, as grete as any steer,
To hunten at the leoun or the deer,
And folwed hym, with mosel faste ybounde,
Colored of gold, and tourettes fyled rounde.
An hundred lordes hadde he in his route,
Armed ful wel, with hertes stierne and stoute.
With Arcita, in stories as men fynde,
The grete Emetreus, the kyng of Inde,
Upon a steede bay, trapped in steel,
Covered in clooth of gold dyapred weel,
Cam ridynge lyk the god of armes, Mars.
His cote-armure was of clooth of Tars,
Couched with perles white and rounde and grete.
His sadel was of brend gold newe ybete;
A mantelet upon his shuldre hangynge
Bret-ful of rubyes rede, as fyr sparklynge.
His crispe heer lyk rynges was yronne,
And that was yelow, and glytered as the sonne.
His nose was heigh, hise eyen bright citryn,
Hise lippes rounde, his colour was sangwyn;
A fewe frakenes in his face yspreynd,
Bitwixen yelow and somdel blak ymeynd,
And as a leoun he his looking caste.
Of fyve and twenty yeer his age I caste;
His berd was wel bigonne for to sprynge,
His voys was as a trompe thonderynge,
Upon his heed he wered of laurer grene
A gerland, fressh and lusty for to sene.

2163 mantel; shulder. 2164 Brat. 2174 thondringe.

Upon his hand he bar for his deduyt
An egle tame, as any lilye whyt.
An hundred lordes hadde he with hym there,
Al armed, save hir heddes, in al hir gere,
Ful richely in alle maner thynges.
For trusteth wel, that dukes, erles, kynges,
Were gadered in this noble compaignye,
For love, and for encrees of chivalrye.
Aboute this kyng ther ran on every part
Ful many a tame leoun and leopard,
And in this wise thise lordes alle and some
Been on the Sonday to the citee come,
Aboute pryme, and in the toun alight.
This Theseus, this duc, this worthy knyght,
Whan he had broght hem into his citee,
And inned hem, everich in his degree,
He festeth hem, and dooth so greet labour
To esen hem and doon hem al honour,
That yet men weneth that no maner wit
Of noon estaat ne koude amenden it.
The mynstralcye, the service at the feeste,
The grete yiftes to the mooste and leeste,
The riche array of Theseus paleys,
Ne who sat first ne last upon the deys,
What ladyes fairest been, or best daunsynge,
Or which of hem kan dauncen best and synge,
Ne who moost felyngly speketh of love,
What haukes sitten on the perche above,
What houndes liggen in the floor adoun—
Of al this make I now no mencioun;
But, al theffect, that thynketh me the beste,
Now cometh the point, and herkneth if yow leste.
The Sonday nyght, er day bigan to sprynge,
Whan Palamon the larke herde synge,
Al though it nere nat day by houres two,
Yet song the larke, and Palamon also.

With hooly herte and with an heigh corage
He roos, to wenden on his pilgrymage,
Unto the blisful Citherea benigne,
I mene Venus, honurable and digne.
And in hir houre he walketh forth a pas
Unto the lystes, ther hire temple was,
And doun he kneleth, with ful humble cheer,
And herte soor, and seyde in this manere.
"Faireste of faire, O lady myn, Venus,
Doughter to Jove, and spouse of Vulcanus,
Thow glader of the Mount of Citheron,
For thilke love thow haddest to Adoon,
Have pitee of my bittre teeris smerte,
And taak myn humble preyere at thyn herte.
Allas, I ne have no langage to telle
Theffectes, ne the tormentz of myn helle!
Myn herte may myne harmes nat biwreye,
I am so confus that I kan noght seye.
But mercy, lady bright! that knowest weele
My thought, and seest what harmes that I feele.
Considere al this, and rewe upon my soore,
As wisly, as I shal for everemoore,
Emforth my myght, thy trewe servant be,
And holden werre alwey with chastitee.
That make I myn avow, so ye me helpe.
I kepe noght of armes for to yelpe,
Ne I ne axe nat tomorwe to have victorie,
Ne renoun in this cas, ne veyne glorie
Of pris of armes blowen up and doun,
But I wolde have fully possessioun
Of Emelye, and dye in thy servyse.
Fynd thow the manere how, and in what wyse—
I recche nat, but it may bettre be
To have victorie of hem, or they of me—
So that I have my lady in myne armes.
For though so be, that Mars is god of armes,

Youre vertu is so greet in hevene above
That if yow list, I shal wel have my love.
Thy temple wol I worshipe everemo,
And on thyn auter, where I ride or go,
I wol doon sacrifice and fires beete.
And if ye wol nat so, my lady sweete,
Thanne preye I thee, tomorwe with a spere
That Arcita me thurgh the herte bere.
Thanne rekke I noght, whan I have lost my lyf,
Though that Arcita wynne hir to his wyf.
This is theffect and ende of my preyere,
Yif me my love, thow blisful lady deere!"
Whan the orison was doon of Palamon,
His sacrifice he dide, and that anon,
Ful pitously with alle circumstaunce;
Al telle I noght as now his observaunce.
But atte laste, the statue of Venus shook,
And made a signe wherby that he took
That his preyere accepted was that day.
For thogh the signe shewed a delay,
Yet wiste he wel that graunted was his boone,
And with glad herte he wente hym hoom ful soone.
  The thridde houre inequal, that Palamon
Bigan to Venus temple for to gon,
Up roos the sonne, and up roos Emelye,
And to the temple of Dyane gan hye.
Hir maydens that she thider with hir ladde,
Ful redily with hem the fyr they ladde,
Thencens, the clothes, and the remenant al
That to the sacrifice longen shal.
The hornes fulle of meeth, as was the gyse,
Ther lakked noght to doon hir sacrifise,
Smokynge the temple, ful of clothes faire.
This Emelye, with herte debonaire,
Hir body wessh with water of a welle—
But how she dide hir ryte I dar nat telle,

But it be any thing in general;
And yet it were a game to heeren al,
To hym that meneth wel it were no charge,
But it is good a man been at his large.—
Hir brighte heer was kempt untressed al,
A coroune of a grene ook cerial
Upon hir heed was set, ful fair and meete.
Two fyres on the auter gan she beete,
And dide hir thynges as men may biholde
In Stace of Thebes, and thise bookes olde.
Whan kyndled was the fyr, with pitous cheere
Unto Dyane she spak as ye may heere.
"O chaste goddesse of the wodes grene,
To whom bothe hevene and erthe and see is sene,
Queene of the regne of Pluto derk and lowe,
Goddesse of maydens, that myn herte hast knowe
Ful many a yeer, and woost what I desire,
As keep me fro thy vengeaunce and thyn ire,
That Attheon aboughte cruelly.
Chaste goddesse, wel wostow that I
Desire to ben a mayden al my lyf,
Ne nevere wol I be no love ne wyf.
I am, thow woost, yet of thy compaignye,
A mayde, and love huntynge and venerye,
And for to walken in the wodes wilde,
And noght to ben a wyf, and be with childe.
Noght wol I knowe the compaignye of man;
Now helpe me, lady, sith ye may and kan,
For tho thre formes that thou hast in thee.
And Palamon, that hath swich love to me,
And eek Arcite, that loveth me so sore,
This grace I preye thee, withoute moore,
As sende love and pees bitwixe hem two,
And fro me turne awey hir hertes so,
That al hir hoote love and hir desir,

2289 kempd. 2317 *As* And.

And al hir bisy torment and hir fir,
Be queynt, or turned in another place.
And if so be thou wolt do me no grace,
And if my destynee be shapen so
That I shal nedes have oon of hem two,
As sende me hym that moost desireth me.
Bihoold, goddesse, of clene chastitee,
The bittre teeris that on my chekes falle.
Syn thou art mayde and kepere of us alle,
My maydenhede thou kepe and wel conserve,
And whil I lyve a mayde, I wol thee serve."
The fires brenne upon the auter cleere,
Whil Emelye was thus in hir preyere;
But sodeynly she saugh a sighte queynte,
For right anon oon of the fyres queynte,
And quyked agayn, and after that anon
That oother fyr was queynt and al agon.
And as it queynte, it made a whistelynge
As doon thise wete brondes in hir brennynge;
And at the brondes ende out ran anon
As it were blody dropes many oon;
For which so soore agast was Emelye
That she was wel ny mad, and gan to crye;
For she ne wiste what it signyfied.
But oonly for the feere thus hath she cried,
And weep that it was pitee for to heere;
And therwithal Dyane gan appeere,
With bowe in honde, right as an hunteresse,
And seyde, "Doghter, stynt thyn hevynesse.
Among the goddes hye it is affermed,
And by eterne word writen and confermed,
Thou shalt ben wedded unto oon of tho
That han for thee so muchel care and wo.
But unto which of hem I may nat telle,
Farwel, for I ne may no lenger dwelle.

2337 whistlynge.

The fires whiche that on myn auter brenne
Shule thee declaren, er that thou go henne,
Thyn aventure of love, as in this cas."
And with that word, the arwes in the caas
Of the goddesse clateren faste and rynge,
And forth she wente, and made a vanysshynge,
For which this Emelye astoned was,
And seyde, "What amounteth this, allas!
I putte me in thy protecciouN,
Dyane, and in thy disposicioun!"
And hoom she goth anon the nexte weye.
This is theffect, ther is namoore to seye.
The nexte houre of Mars folwynge this
Arcite unto the temple walked is
Of fierse Mars, to doon his sacrifise
With alle the rytes of his payen wyse.
With pitous herte and heigh devocioun
Right thus to Mars he seyde his orisoun.
"O stronge god, that in the regnes colde
Of Trace honoured art and lord yholde,
And hast in every regne and every lond
Of armes al the brydel in thyn hond,
And hem fortunest as thee lyst devyse,
Accepte of me my pitous sacrifise.
If so be that my youthe may deserve,
And that my myght be worthy for to serve
Thy godhede, that I may been oon of thyne,
Thanne preye I thee to rewe upon my pyne.
For thilke peyne, and thilke hoote fir,
In which thou whilom brendest for desir
Whan that thow usedest the greet beautee
Of faire yonge fresshe Venus free,
And haddest hir in armes at thy wille—
Al though thee ones on a tyme mysfille
Whan Vulcanus hadde caught thee in his las,

2356 declare. 2385 *greet om.*

And foond thee liggynge by his wyf, allas!—
For thilke sorwe that was in thyn herte
Have routhe as wel, upon my peynes smerte!
I am yong and unkonnynge as thow woost,
And, as I trowe, with love offended moost
That evere was any lyves creature;
For she that dooth me al this wo endure,
Ne reccheth nevere wher I synke or fleete.
And wel I woot, er she me mercy heete,
I moot with strengthe wynne hir in the place.
And wel I woot, withouten help or grace
Of thee, ne may my strengthe noght availle.
Thanne help me, lord, tomorwe in my bataille!
For thilke fyr that whilom brente thee,
As wel as thilke fyr now brenneth me,
And do that I tomorwe have victorie,
Myn be the travaille and thyn be the glorie.
Thy sovereyn temple wol I moost honouren
Of any place, and alwey moost labouren
In thy plesaunce, and in thy craftes stronge,
And in thy temple I wol my baner honge,
And alle the armes of my compaignye;
And evere-mo, unto that day I dye,
Eterne fir I wol biforn thee fynde.
And eek to this avow I wol me bynde
My beerd, myn heer, that hongeth long adoun,
That nevere yet ne felte offensioun
Of rasour, nor of shere, I wol thee yeve,
And ben thy trewe servant whil I lyve.
Now lord, have routhe upon my sorwes soore;
Yif me the victorie, I aske thee namoore!"
  The preyere stynt of Arcita the stronge;
The rynges on the temple dore that honge,
And eek the dores clatereden ful faste,
Of which Arcita somwhat hym agaste.
The fyres brenden upon the auter brighte,

That it gan al the temple for to lighte,
And sweete smel the ground anon upyaf,
And Arcita anon his hand uphaf,
And moore encens into the fyr he caste,
With othere rytes mo, and atte laste
The statue of Mars bigan his hauberk rynge,
And with that soun he herde a murmurynge,
Ful lowe and dym, and seyde thus, 'Victorie!'
For which he yaf to Mars honour and glorie;
And thus with joye and hope wel to fare,
Arcite anon unto his in is fare,
As fayn as fowel is of the brighte sonne.
And right anon swich strif ther is bigonne
For thilke grauntyng in the hevene above
Bitwixe Venus, the Goddesse of Love,
And Mars the stierne God armypotente,
That Jupiter was bisy it to stente;
Til that the pale Saturnus the colde,
That knew so manye of aventures olde,
Foond in his olde experience an art
That he ful soone hath plesed every part.
As sooth is seyd, elde hath greet avantage;
In elde is bothe wysdom and usage;
Men may the olde atrenne, and noght atrede.
Saturne anon, to stynten strif and drede,
Al be it that it is agayn his kynde,
Of al this strif he gan remedie fynde.
"My deere doghter Venus," quod Saturne,
"My cours, that hath so wyde for to turne,
Hath moore power than woot any man.
Myn is the drenchyng in the see so wan,
Myn is the prison in the derke cote,
Myn is the stranglyng and hangyng by the throte,
The murmure, and the cherles rebellyng,
The groynynge, and the pryvee empoysonyng.

2445 *an* and.

I do vengeance and pleyn correccioun,
Whil I dwelle in the signe of the leoun.
Myn is the ruyne of the hye halles,
The fallynge of the toures and of the walles
Upon the mynour, or the carpenter.
I slow Sampsoun shakynge the piler,
And myne be the maladyes colde,
The derke tresons, and the castes olde;
My lookyng is the fader of pestilence.
Now weep namoore, I shal doon diligence
That Palamon, that is thyn owene knyght,
Shal have his lady, as thou has him hight.
Though Mars shal helpe his knyght, yet nathelees
Bitwixe yow ther moot be somtyme pees,
Al be ye noght of o compleccioun—
That causeth al day swich divsioun.
I am thyn aiel, redy at thy wille,
Weep now namoore, I wol thy lust fulfille."
Now wol I stynten of the goddes above,
Of Mars and of Venus, goddesse of Love,
And telle yow, as pleynly as I kan,
The grete effect for which that I bygan.

Explicit tercia pars.

Sequitur pars quarta.

Greet was the feeste in Atthenes that day,
And eek the lusty seson of that May
Made every wight to been in such plesaunce
That al that Monday justen they and daunce,
And spenten it in Venus heigh servyse.
And by the cause that they sholde ryse
Eerly for to seen the grete fight,
Unto hir reste wenten they at nyght.
And on the morwe, whan that day gan sprynge,

2462 *the* (1) *om.*

Of hors and harneys, noyse and claterynge
Ther was in hostelryes al aboute.
And to the paleys rood ther many a route
Of lordes, upon steedes and palfreys.
Ther maystow seen divisynge of harneys
So unkouth and so riche, and wroght so weel,
Of goldsmythrye, of browdynge, and of steel;
The sheeldes brighte, testeres, and trappures;
Gold-hewen helmes, hauberkes, cote-armures;
Lordes in parementz on hir courseres,
Knyghtes of retenue and eek squieres,
Nailynge the speres, and helmes bokelynge,
Giggynge of sheeldes, with layneres lacynge.
There as nede is, they weren nothyng ydel.
The fomy steedes on the golden brydel
Gnawynge, and faste the armurers also
With fyle and hamer prikynge to and fro;
Yemen on foote and communes many oon,
With shorte staves thikke as they may goon,
Pypes, trompes, nakerers, clariounes,
That in the bataille blowen blody sounes;
The paleys ful of peples up and doun,
Heere thre, ther ten, holdynge hir questioun,
Dyvynynge of thise Thebane knyghtes two.
Somme seyden thus, somme seyde it shal be so,
Somme helden with hym with the blake berd,
Somme with the balled, somme with the thikke-herd,
Somme seyde he looked grymme, and he wolde fighte,
He hath a sparth of twenty pound of wighte,
Thus was the halle ful of divynynge
Longe after that the sonne gan to sprynge.

The grete Theseus, that of his sleep awaked
With mynstralcie and noyse that was maked
Heeld yet the chambre of his paleys riche,
Til that the Thebane knyghtes, bothe yliche
Honured, were into the paleys fet.

Duc Theseus was at a wyndow set,
Arrayed, right as he were a god in trone.
The peple preesseth thiderward ful soone,
Hym for to seen and doon heigh reverence.
And eek to herkne his heste and his sentence.
An heraud on a scaffold made an "Oo!"
Til al the noyse of peple was ydo,
And whan he saugh the peple of noyse al stille,
Tho shewed he the myghty dukes wille.
"The lord hath of his heigh discrecioun
Considered, that it were destruccioun
To gentil blood, to fighten in the gyse
Of mortal bataille, now in this emprise;
Wherfore, to shapen that they shal nat dye,
He wolde his firste purpos modifye.
No man therfore, up peyne of los of lyf,
No maner shot, ne polax, ne short knyf
Into the lystes sende, ne thider brynge.
Ne short swerd for to stoke, with poynt bitynge,
No man ne drawe, ne bere by his syde;
Ne no man shal unto his felawe ryde
But o cours, with a sharpe ygrounde spere.
Foyne if hym list on foote, hym-self to were;
And he that is at meschief shal be take,
And noght slayn, but be broght unto the stake
That shal ben ordeyned on either syde,
But thider he shal by force, and there abyde.
And if so be the chevetayn be take
On outher syde, or elles sleen his make,
No lenger shal the turneiynge laste.
God spede you, gooth forth, and ley on faste!
With long swerd and with maces fight youre fille;
Gooth now youre wey, this is the lordes wille."
The voys of peple touchede the hevene
So loude cride they with murie stevene,

2544 *ne* (1) *om.* 2555 chieftayn. 2559 fighteth. 2561 touched.

"God save swich a lord, that is so good
He wilneth no destruccion of blood."
Up goon the trompes and the melodye,
And to the lystes rit the compaignye,
By ordinance, thurgh-out the citee large
Hanged with clooth of gold, and nat with sarge.
Ful lik a lord this noble duc gan ryde,
Thise two Thebanes upon either syde,
And after rood the queene and Emelye,
And after that another compaignye,
Of oon and oother, after hir degre;
And thus they passen thurgh-out the citee
And to the lystes come they by tyme.
It nas nat of the day yet fully pryme
Whan set was Theseus ful riche and hye,
Ypolita the queene, and Emelye,
And othere ladys in degrees aboute.
Unto the seettes preesseth al the route,
And westward thurgh the gates under Marte,
Arcite, and eek the hondred of his parte,
With baner reed is entred right anon.
And in that selve moment Palamon
Is under Venus estward in the place,
With baner whyt, and hardy chiere and face.
In al the world to seken up and doun
So evene withouten variacioun
Ther nere swiche compaignyes tweye!
For ther was noon so wys, that koude seye
That any hadde of oother avauntage,
Of worthynesse ne of estaat ne age,
So evene were they chosen, for to gesse.
And in two renges faire they hem dresse,
Whan that hir names rad were everichon,
That in hir nombre gyle were ther noon.
Tho were the gates shet and cried was loude,

2570 Thebans. 2593 *they om.*

"Do now youre devoir, yonge knyghtes proude!"
The heraudes lefte hir prikyng up and doun;
Now ryngen trompes loude and clarioun.
Ther is namoore to seyn, but west and est
In goon the speres ful sadly in arrest,
In gooth the sharpe spore into the syde.
Ther seen men who kan juste, and who kan ryde,
Ther shyveren shaftes upon sheeldes thikke;
He feeleth thurgh the herte-spoon the prikke.
Up spryngen speres twenty foot on highte;
Out gooth the swerdes as the silver brighte.
The helmes they tohewen and toshrede,
Out brest the blood, with stierne stremes rede,
With myghty maces the bones they tobreste.
He thurgh the thikkeste of the throng gan threste;
Ther stomblen steedes stronge, and doun gooth al;
He rolleth under foot as dooth a bal,
He foyneth on his feet with his tronchoun,
And he hym hurtleth with his hors adoun.
He thurgh the body is hurt and sithen ytake,
Maugree his heed, and broght unto the stake,
As forward was, right there he moste abyde;
Another lad is on that oother syde.
And som tyme dooth hem Theseus to reste,
Hem to refresshe, and drynken if hem leste.
Ful ofte a day han thise Thebanes two
Togydre ymet, and wroght his felawe wo.
Unhorsed hath ech oother of hem tweye,
Ther nas no tygre in the vale of Galgopheye
Whan that hir whelp is stole, whan it is lite,
So crueel on the hunte, as is Arcite
For jelous herte upon this Palamoun;
Ne in Belmarye ther nys so fel leoun
That hunted is, or for his hunger wood,
Ne of his praye desireth so the blood,

2613 semblen. 2622 fresshen.

As Palamoun to sleen his foo Arcite.
The jelous strokes on hir helmes byte,
Out renneth blood on bothe hir sydes rede.
Som tyme an ende ther is of every dede;
For er the sonne unto the reste wente,
The stronge kyng Emetreus gan hente
This Palamon, as he faught with Arcite,
And made his swerd depe in his flessh to byte.
And by the force of twenty is he take
Unyolden, and ydrawe unto the stake.
And in the rescous of this Palamoun
The stronge kyng Lygurge is born adoun,
And kyng Emetreus, for al his strengthe,
Is born out of his sadel a swerdes lengthe,
So hitte him Palamoun er he were take;
But al for noght, he was broght to the stake.
His hardy herte myghte hym helpe naught,
He moste abyde, whan that he was caught,
By force, and eek by composicioun.
Who sorweth now but woful Palamoun,
That moot namoore goon agayn to fighte?
And whan that Theseus hadde seyn this sighte
Unto the folk that foghten thus echon
He cryde, "Hoo! namoore, for it is doon.
I wol be trewe juge, and no partie;
Arcite of Thebes shal have Emelie,
That by his fortune hath hir faire ywonne!"
Anon ther is a noyse of peple bigonne
For joye of this so loude and heighe withalle
It semed that the lystes sholde falle.
What kan now faire Venus doon above?
What seith she now, what dooth this queene of Love,
But wepeth so, for wantynge of hir wille,
Til that hir teeres in the lystes fille.
She seyde, "I am ashamed, doutelees."

2643 rescus.

Saturnus seyde, "Doghter, hoold thy pees,
Mars hath his wille, his knyght hath al his boone,
And, by myn heed, thow shalt been esed soone."
The trompes with the loude mynstralcie,
The heraudes that ful loude yolle and crie,
Been in hir wele for joye of Daun Arcite.
But herkneth me, and stynteth now a lite,
Which a myracle ther bifel anon.
This fierse Arcite hath of his helm ydon,
And on a courser for to shewe his face
He priketh endelong the large place,
Lokynge upward upon this Emelye,
And she agayn hym caste a freendlich eye,
(For wommen, as to speken in commune,
They folwen al the favour of Fortune)
And she was al his chiere, as in his herte.
Out of the ground a furie infernal sterte,
From Pluto sent, at requeste of Saturne,
For which his hors for fere gan to turne,
And leep aside and foundred as he leep.
And er that Arcite may taken keep,
He pighte hym on the pomel of his heed,
That in the place he lay as he were deed,
His brest tobrosten with his sadel-bowe.
As blak he lay as any cole or crowe,
So was the blood yronnen in his face.
Anon he was yborn out of the place,
With herte soor, to Theseus paleys.
Tho was he korven out of his harneys,
And in a bed ybrought ful faire and blyve,
For he was yet in memorie and alyve,
And alwey criynge after Emelye.
Duc Theseus, with al his compaignye,
Is comen hoom to Atthenes his citee,
With alle blisse and greet solempnitee;

2679 *this om.* 2681-2 *om.* 2683 *she om.*

Al be it that this aventure was falle,
He nolde noght disconforten hem alle.
Men seyde eek that Arcite shal nat dye,
He shal been heeled of his maladye.
And of another thyng they weren as fayn,
That of hem alle was ther noon yslayn,
Al were they soore yhurt, and namely oon,
That with a spere was thirled his brest-boon.
To othere woundes, and to broken armes,
Somme hadden salves, and somme hadden charmes,
Fermacies of herbes and eek save
They dronken, for they wolde hir lymes have.
For which this noble duc as he wel kan,
Conforteth and honoureth every man,
And made revel al the longe nyght
Unto the straunge lordes, as was right.
Ne ther was holden no disconfitynge
But as a justes or a tourneiynge,
For soothly ther was no disconfiture—
For fallyng nys nat but an aventure—
Ne to be lad by force unto the stake
Unyolden, and with twenty knyghtes take,
O persone allone, withouten mo,
And haryed forth by arme, foot, and too,
And eke his steede dryven forth with staves,
With footmen, bothe yemen and eek knaves,
It nas aretted hym no vileynye,
Ther may no man clepen it cowardye.
For which anon duc Theseus leet crye,
To stynten alle rancour and envye,
The gree, as wel of o syde as of oother,
And eyther syde ylik as ootheres brother,
And yaf hem yiftes after hir degree,
And fully heeld a feeste dayes three,
And convoyed the kynges worthily

2726 arm.

Out of his toun a journee, largely;
And hoom wente every man, the righte way,
Ther was namoore but 'fare-wel, have good day.'
Of this bataille I wol namoore endite,
But speke of Palamoun and of Arcyte.
Swelleth the brest of Arcite, and the soore
Encreesseth at his herte moore and moore.
The clothered blood for any lechecraft
Corrupteth, and is in his bouk ylaft,
That neither veyne-blood, ne ventusynge,
Ne drynke of herbes may ben his helpynge.
The vertu expulsif, or animal,
Fro thilke vertu cleped natural
Ne may the venym voyden, ne expelle.
The pipes of his longes gonne to swelle,
And every lacerte in his brest adoun
Is shent with venym and corrupcioun.
Hym gayneth neither for to gete his lif
Vomyt upward, ne dounward laxatif;
Al is tobrosten thilke regioun,
Nature hath now no dominacioun.
And certeinly, ther Nature wol nat wirche,
Fare-wel phisik, go ber the man to chirche!
This al and som, that Arcita moot dye;
For which he sendeth after Emelye
And Palamon, that was his cosyn deere.
Thanne seyde he thus, as ye shal after heere:
"Naught may the woful spirit in myn herte
Declare o point of alle my sorwes smerte
To yow, my lady, that I love moost.
But I biquethe the servyce of my goost
To yow aboven every creature.
Syn that my lyf may no lenger dure,
Allas, the wo! allas, the peynes stronge
That I for yow have suffred, and so longe!
Allas, the deeth! allas, myn Emelye!

Allas, departynge of our compaignye!
Allas, myn hertes queene! allas, my wyf!
Myn hertes lady, endere of my lyf!
What is this world? what asketh men to have?
Now with his love, now in his colde grave,
Allone, withouten any compaignye.
Fare-wel, my swete foo, myn Emelye,
And softe taak me in youre armes tweye,
For love of God, and herkneth what I seye.
"I have heer with my cosyn Palamon
Had strif and rancour many a day agon,
For love of yow, and for my jalousye.
And Juppiter so wys my soule gye
To speken of a servaunt proprely,
With alle circumstances trewely,
That is to seyn, trouthe, honour, and knyghthede,
Wysdom, humblesse, estaat, and heigh kynrede,
Fredom, and al that longeth to that art,
So Juppiter have of my soule part
As in this world right now ne knowe I non
So worthy to ben loved, as Palamon
That serveth yow, and wol doon al his lyf;
And if that evere ye shul ben a wyf,
Foryet nat Palamon, the gentil man."
And with that word his speche faille gan,
And from his herte up to his brest was come
The coold of deeth, that hadde hym overcome.
And yet moreover in hise armes two
The vital strengthe is lost and al ago.
Oonly the intellect, withouten moore,
That dwelled in his herte syk and soore
Gan faillen, when the herte felte deeth.
Dusked hise eyen two, and failled breeth,
But on his lady yet caste he his eye.
His laste word was "mercy, Emelye!"

2789 *and om.* 2801 for in.

His spirit chaunged hous, and wente ther
As I cam nevere, I kan nat tellen wher,
Therfore I stynte; I nam no divinistre,
Of soules fynde I nat in this registre,
Ne me ne list thilke opinions to telle
Of hem, though that they writen wher they dwelle.
Arcite is coold, ther Mars his soule gye:
Now wol I speken forth of Emelye.
Shrighte Emelye, and howleth Palamon,
And Theseus his suster took anon
Swownynge, and baar hir fro the corps away.
What helpeth it to tarien forth the day
To tellen how she weep bothe eve and morwe?
For in swich cas wommen have swich sorwe
Whan that hir housbond is from hem ago,
That for the moore part they sorwen so,
Or ellis fallen in swich maladye,
That at the laste certeinly they dye.
Infinite been the sorwes and the teeres
Of olde folk, and eek of tendre yeeres
In al the toun, for deeth of this Theban.
For hym ther wepeth bothe child and man;
So greet a wepyng was ther noon, certayn,
Whan Ector was ybroght al fressh yslayn
To Troye, allas, the pitee that was ther!
Cracchynge of chekes, rentynge eek of heer;—
"Why woldestow be deed," thise wommen crye,
"And haddest gold ynough, and Emelye?"
No man myghte gladen Theseus,
Savynge his olde fader, Egeus,
That knew this worldes transmutacioun,
As he hadde seyn it chaungen up and doun,
Joye after wo, and wo after gladnesse,
And shewed hem ensamples and liknesse.
"Right as ther dyed nevere man," quod he,

2840 *chaungen om.*

"That he ne lyvede in erthe in som degree,
Right so ther lyvede never man," he seyde,
"In al this world that somtyme he ne deyde.
This world nys but a thurghfare ful of wo,
And we been pilgrymes passynge to and fro.
Deeth is an ende of every worldes soore."
And over al this yet seyde he muchel moore,
To this effect ful wisely to enhorte
The peple, that they sholde hem reconforte.
Duc Theseus, with al his bisy cure,
Caste now, wher that the sepulture
Of goode Arcite may best ymaked be,
And eek moost honurable in his degree.
And at the laste he took conclusioun
That ther as first Arcite and Palamoun
Hadden for love the bataille hem bitwene,
That in that selve grove swoote and grene
Ther as he hadde hise amorouse desires,
His compleynte, and for love hise hoote fires
He wolde make a fyr, in which the office
Funeral he myghte al accomplice;
And leet comande anon to hakke and hewe
The okes olde, and leye hem on a rewe
In colpons, wel arrayed for to brenne.
Hise officers with swifte feet they renne
And ryden anon at his comandement;
And after this Theseus hath ysent
After a beere, and it al over-spradde
With clooth of gold, the richeste that he hadde.
And of the same suyte he cladde Arcite,
Upon his hondes hadde he gloves white,
Eek on his heed a coroune of laurer grene,
And in his hond a swerd ful bright and kene.
He leyde hym bare the visage on the beere,
Ther-with he weep that pitee was to heere.

2854 cast.

And for the peple sholde seen hym alle,
Whan it was day, he broghte hym to the halle,
That roreth of the criyng and the soun.
Tho cam this woful Theban, Palamoun,
With flotery berd and rugged asshy heeres,
In clothes blake, ydropped al with teeres,
And passynge othere of wepynge Emelye,
The rewefulleste of al the compaignye.
In as muche as the servyce sholde be
The moore noble and riche in his degree,
Duc Theseus leet forth thre steedes brynge
That trapped were in steel al gliterynge,
And covered with the armes of daun Arcite.
Upon thise steedes that weren grete and white
Ther sitten folk, of whiche oon baar his sheeld,
Another his spere up in his hondes heeld,
The thridde baar with hym his bowe Turkeys,
Of brend gold was the caas, and eek the harneys;
And riden forth a paas, with sorweful cheere,
Toward the grove, as ye shul after heere.
The nobleste of the Grekes that ther were
Upon hir shuldres caryeden the beere.
With slakke paas, and eyen rede and wete,
Thurghout the citee by the maister-strete,
That sprad was al with blak, and wonder hye
Right of the same is the strete ywrye.
Upon the right hond wente olde Egeus,
And on that oother syde duc Theseus,
With vessel in hir hand of gold ful fyn,
Al ful of hony, milk, and blood, and wyn.
Eek Palamon, with ful greet compaignye,
And after that cam woful Emelye,
With fyr in honde, as was that tyme the gyse,
To do the office of funeral servyse.
Heigh labour, and ful greet apparaillynge,

2892 *that weren om.* 2894 *up om.* 2901 slak.

Was at the service and the fyr makynge,
That with his grene top the heven raughte,
And twenty fadme of brede the armes straughte;
This is to seyn, the bowes weren so brode.
Of stree first ther was leyd ful many a lode,
But how the fyr was maked upon highte,
Ne eek the names that the trees highte,
As, ook, firre, birch, aspe, alder, holm, popeler,
Wylugh, elm, plane, assh, box, chasteyn, lynde, laurer,
Mapul, thorn, bech, hasel, ew, whippeltre,
How they weren fild shal nat be toold for me,
Ne how the goddes ronnen up and doun
Disherited of hir habitacioun,
In whiche they woneden in reste and pees,
Nymphes, Fawnes, and Amadrides;
Ne how the beestes and the briddes alle
Fledden for fere, whan the wode was falle;
Ne how the ground agast was of the light,
That was nat wont to seen the sonne bright;
Ne how the fyr was couched first with stree,
And thanne with drye stokkes cloven a thre,
And thanne with grene wode and spicerye,
And thanne with clooth of gold and with perrye,
And gerlandes hangynge with ful many a flour,
The mirre, thencens, with al so greet odour;
Ne how Arcite lay among al this,
Ne what richesse aboute his body is,
Ne how that Emelye, as was the gyse,
Putte in the fyr of funeral servyse;
Ne how she swowned whan men made the fyr,
Ne what she spak, ne what was hir desir,
Ne what jeweles men in the fyr caste,
Whan that the fyr was greet and brente faste;
Ne how somme caste hir sheeld, and somme hir spere,
And of hire vestimentz whiche that they were,

2915 *raughte om.* 2943 *the om.*

And coppes full of wyn, and milk, and blood,
Into the fyr, that brente as it were wood,
Ne how the Grekes, with an huge route,
Thryes riden al the place aboute,
Upon the left hand with a loud shoutynge,
And thries with hir speres claterynge,
And thries how the ladyes gonne crye,
And how that lad was homward Emelye;
Ne how Arcite is brent to asshen colde,
Ne how that lychewake was yholde
Al thilke nyght, ne how the Grekes pleye
The wakepleyes ne kepe I nat to seye,
Who wrasleth best naked, with oille enoynt,
Ne who that baar hym best in no disjoynt;
I wol nat tellen eek, how that they goon
Hoom til Atthenes, whan the pley is doon;
But shortly to the point thanne wol I wende,
And maken of my longe tale an ende.

By processe, and by lengthe of certeyn yeres,
Al stynted is the moornynge and the teres
Of Grekes, by oon general assent.
Thanne semed me ther was a parlement
At Atthenes, upon certein pointz and caas,
Among the whiche pointz yspoken was
To have with certein contrees alliaunce,
And have fully of Thebans obeisaunce,
For which this noble Theseus anon
Leet senden after gentil Palamon,
Unwist of hym what was the cause and why.
But in hise blake clothes sorwefully
He cam at his comandement in hye;
Tho sente Theseus for Emelye.
Whan they were set, and hust was al the place,
And Theseus abiden hadde a space
Er any word cam fram his wise brest,

2952 Tries.

Hise eyen sette he ther as was his lest,
And with a sad visage he siked stille,
And after that right thus he seyde his wille.
"The firste moevere of the cause above
Whan he first made the faire cheyne of love,
Greet was theffect, and heigh was his entente;
Wel wiste he, why, and what therof he mente,
For with that faire cheyne of love he bond
The fyr, the eyr, the water, and the lond,
In certeyn boundes that they may nat flee.
That same prince and that same moevere," quod he,
"Hath stablissed in this wrecched world adoun
Certeyne dayes and duracioun
To al that is engendred in this place,
Over the whiche day they may nat pace;
Al mowe they yet tho dayes wel abregge,
Ther nedeth noght noon auctoritee allegge,
For it is preeved by experience—
But that me list declaren my sentence.
Thanne may men by this ordre wel discerne
That thilke moevere stable is and eterne.
Wel may men knowe, but it be a fool,
That every part deryveth from his hool;
For nature hath nat taken his bigynnyng
Of no partie nor cantel of a thyng,
But of a thyng that parfit is and stable,
Descendynge so til it be corrumpable;
And therfore, of his wise purveiaunce,
He hath so wel biset his ordinaunce,
That speces of thynges and progressiouns
Shullen enduren by successiouns,
And nat eterne, withouten any lye.
This maystow understonde and seen at eye.
Lo the ook, that hath so long a norisshynge
From tyme that it first bigynneth sprynge,

2998 which. 3006 dirryueth. 3007 *nat om.* 3008 or of. 3016 *at* it.

And hath so long a lif, as we may see,
Yet at the laste wasted is the tree.
Considereth eek, how that the harde stoon
Under oure feet, on which we trede and goon,
Yit wasteth it, as it lyth by the weye.
The brode ryver somtyme wexeth dreye,
The grete toures se we wane and wende,
Thanne may ye se that al this thyng hath ende.
Of man and womman seen we wel also,
That nedeth, in oon of thise termes two,
This is to seyn, in youthe or elles age,
He moot be deed, the kyng as shal a page.
Som in his bed, som in the depe see,
Som in the large feeld, as men may se;
Ther helpeth noght, al goth that ilke weye,
Thanne may I seyn that al this thyng moot deye.
What maketh this, but Juppiter the kyng,
That is prince and cause of alle thyng
Convertyng al unto his propre welle
From which it is deryved, sooth to telle,
And heer agayns no creature on lyve
Of no degree availleth for to stryve.
Thanne is it wysdom, as it thynketh me,
To maken vertu of necessitee,
And take it weel, that we may nat eschue;
And namely, that to us alle is due.
And who so gruccheth ought, he dooth folye,
And rebel is to hym that al may gye.
And certeinly, a man hath moost honour
To dyen in his excellence and flour,
Whan he is siker of his goode name,
Thanne hath he doon his freend ne hym no shame.
And gladder oghte his freend been of his deeth,
Whan with honour upyolden is his breeth,
Than whan his name apalled is for age;

3034 *that om.* 3038 dirryued.

For al forgeten is his vassellage.
Thanne is it best as for a worthy fame,
To dyen whan that he is best of name.
The contrarie of al this is wilfulnesse:
Why grucchen heere his cosyn and his wyf
That goode Arcite, of chivalrie flour,
Departed is with duetee and honour
Out of this foule prisoun of this lyf?
Why grucchen heere his cosyn and his wyf
Of his welfare, that loved hem so weel?
Kan he hem thank? Nay, God woot never a deel!
That bothe his soule and eek hemself offende,
And yet they mowe hir lustes nat amende.
What may I concluden of this longe serye,
But after wo I rede us to be merye,
And thanken Juppiter of al his grace?
And er that we departen from this place
I rede that we make, of sorwes two,
O parfit joye lastyng everemo.
And looketh now, wher moost sorwe is her inne,
Ther wol we first amenden and bigynne.
"Suster," quod he, "this is my fulle assent,
With all thavys heere of my parlement,
That gentil Palamon thyn owene kynght,
That serveth yow with wille, herte, and myght,
And evere hath doon, syn that ye first hym knewe,
That ye shul of your grace upon hym rewe,
And taken hym for housbonde and for lord.
Lene me youre hond, for this is oure accord.
Lat se now of youre wommanly pitee;
He is a kynges brother sone, pardee,
And though he were a povre bacheler,
Syn he hath served yow so many a yeer,
And had for yow so greet adversitee,
It moste been considered, leeveth me,

3071 *that om.*

For gentil mercy oghte to passen right."
Thanne seyde he thus to Palamon ful right:
"I trowe ther nedeth litel sermonyng
To make yow assente to this thyng.
Com neer, and taak youre lady by the hond."
Bitwixen hem was maad anon the bond
That highte matrimoigne, or mariage,
By al the conseil and the baronage.
And thus with alle blisse and melodye
Hath Palamon ywedded Emelye;
And God, that al this wyde world hath wroght,
Sende hym his love that hath it deere aboght!
For now is Palamon in alle wele,
Lyvynge in blisse, in richesse, and in heele,
And Emelye hym loveth so tendrely,
And he hir serveth al so gentilly,
That nevere was ther no word hem bitwene,
Of jalousie, or any oother teene.
Thus endeth Palamon and Emelye,
And God save al this faire compaignye!—Amen—

Heere is ended the knyghtes tale.

3100 *hath om.* 3104 *al om.*

PROLOGUE TO THE MILLERES TALE

Heere folwen the wordes bitwene the Hoost and the Millere

Whan that the Knyght had thus his tale ytoold,
In al the route ne was ther yong ne oold
That he ne seyde it was a noble storie,
And worthy for to drawen to memorie;
And namely the gentils everichon.
Oure Hooste lough, and swoor, "So moot I gon,
This gooth aright, unbokeled is the male,
Lat se now who shal telle another tale,
For trewely the game is wel bigonne.
Now telleth on, sir Monk, if that ye konne
Somwhat to quite with the Knyghtes tale."
The Miller that for-dronken was al pale,
So that unnethe upon his hors he sat,
He nolde avalen neither hood ne hat,
Ne abyde no man for his curteisie,
But in Pilates voys he gan to crie,
And swoor by armes and by blood and bones,
"I kan a noble tale for the nones,
With which I wol now quite the Knyghtes tale."
Oure Hooste saugh that he was dronke of ale,
And seyde, "Abyd, Robyn, my leeve brother,
Som bettre man shal telle us first another,
Abyde, and lat us werken thriftily."
"By Goddes soule," quod he, "that wol nat I,
For I wol speke, or elles go my wey."
Oure Hoost answerde, "Tel on, a devele wey!
Thou art a fool, thy wit is overcome!

3114, 3128, Hoost.

"Now herkneth," quod the Miller, "alle and some,
But first I make a protestacioun
That I am dronke, I knowe it by my soun;
And therfore, if that I mysspeke or seye,
Wyte it the ale of Southwerk I you preye.
For I wol telle a legende and a lyf
Bothe of a carpenter and of his wyf,
How that a clerk hath set the wrightes cappe."
The Reve answerde and seyde, "Stynt thy clappe,
Lat be thy lewed dronken harlotrye,
It is a synne and eek a greet folye
To apeyren any man or hym defame,
And eek to bryngen wyves in swich fame;
Thou mayst ynogh of othere thynges seyn."
This dronke Miller spak ful soone ageyn,
And seyde, "Leve brother Osewold,
Who hath no wyf, he is no cokewold.
But I sey nat therfore that thou art oon,
Ther been ful goode wyves many oon,
And evere a thousand goode ayeyns oon badde;
That knowestow wel thyself, but if thou madde.
Why artow angry with my tale now?
I have a wyf, pardee, as wel as thow,
Yet nolde I for the oxen in my plogh
Take upon me moore than ynogh,
As demen of myself that I were oon;
I wol bileve wel, that I am noon.
An housbonde shal nat been inquisityf
Of Goddes pryvetee, nor of his wyf.
So he may fynde Goddes foysoun there,
Of the remenant nedeth nat enquere."
What sholde I moore seyn, but this Miller
He nolde his wordes for no man forbere,
But tolde his cherles tale in his manere;
Me thynketh that I shal reherce it heere.

3140 *you om.*

And therfore every gentil wight I preye,
For Goddes love, demeth nat that I seye
Of yvel entente, but that I moot reherce
Hir tales alle, be they bettre or werse,
Or elles falsen som of my mateere.
And therfore who-so list it nat yheere,
Turne over the leef, and chese another tale;
For he shal fynde ynowe, grete and smale,
Of storial thyng that toucheth gentillesse,
And eek moralitee, and hoolynesse.
Blameth nat me if that ye chese amys;
The Miller is a cherl, ye knowe wel this,
So was the Reve, and othere manye mo,
And harlotrie they tolden bothe two.
Avyseth yow, and put me out of blame,
And eek men shal nat maken ernest of game.

3184 putteth.

THE TALE.

[One John, a rich and credulous carpenter of Oxford, is beguiled by his wife Alison, through Nicholas, a poor scholar boarding with them. Absolon, the parish clerk, is slighted by Alison; but wreaks vengeance on Nicholas.]

PROLOGUE TO THE REVES TALE

The prologe of the Reves Tale.

Whan folk hadde laughen at this nyce cas
Of Absolon and hende Nicholas,
Diverse folk diversely they seyde,
But for the moore part they loughe and pleyde,
Ne at this tale I saugh no man hym greve,
But it were oonly Osewold the Reve
Bycause he was of carpenteres craft,
A litel ire is in his herte ylaft;
He gan to grucche, and blamed it a lite.
"So theek," quod he, "ful wel koude I yow quite,
With blerynge of a proud milleres eye,
If that me liste speke of ribaudye.
But ik am oold, me list no pley for age,
Gras-tyme is doon, my fodder is now forage,
This white top writeth myne olde yeris,
Myn herte is also mowled as myne heris,
But if I fare as dooth an openers;
That ilke fruyt is ever leng the wers,
Til it be roten in mullok or in stree.
We olde men, I drede, so fare we,
Til we be roten kan we nat be rype.
We hoppen ay whil that the world wol pype,
For in oure wyl ther stiketh evere a nayl
To have an hoor heed and a grene tayl,
As hath a leek, for thogh oure myght be goon,
Oure wyl desireth folie evere in oon.
For whan we may nat doon, than wol we speke,
Yet in oure asshen olde is fyr yreke.
Foure gleedes han we whiche I shal devyse,
Avauntyng, liyng, anger, coveitise;

3870 mowled also.

Thise foure sparkles longen unto eelde.
Oure olde lemes mowe wel been unweelde,
But wyl ne shal nat faillen, that is sooth.
And yet ik have alwey a coltes tooth,
As many a yeer as it is passed henne
Syn that my tappe of lif bigan to renne.
For sikerly whan I was bore, anon
Deeth drough the tappe of lyf, and leet it gon,
And ever sithe hath so the tappe yronne,
Til that almoost al empty is the tonne.
The streem of lyf now droppeth on the chymbe;
The sely tonge may wel rynge and chymbe
Of wrecchednesse that passed is ful yoore.
With olde folk, save dotage, is namoore."
Whan that oure Hoost hadde herd this sermonyng,
He gan to speke as lordly as a kyng,
He seide, "What amounteth al this wit?
What shul we speke alday of hooly writ?
The devel made a reve for to preche,
And of a soutere, shipman, or a leche.
Sey forth thy tale, and tarie nat the tyme.
Lo Depeford, and it is half-wey pryme;
Lo, Grenewych, ther many a shrewe is inne;
It were al tyme thy tale to bigynne."
"Now sires," quod this Osewold the Reve,
"I pray yow alle, that ye nat yow greve,
Thogh I answere, and somdeel sette his howve,
For leveful is with force force of-showvè.
This dronke Millere hath ytoold us heer,
How that bigyled was a Carpenteer,
Peraventure in scorn, for I am oon;
And by youre leve I shal hym quite anoon.
Right in his cherles termes wol I speke,
I pray to God his nekke mote breke!
He kan wel in myn eye seen a stalke,
But in his owene he kan nat seen a balke."

THE TALE.

[Simkin, a rich thieving miller of Trumpington Mill, near Cambridge, is well served by two Cambridge clerks of the north country, who beguile his wife and daughter, recover the stolen meal which he had hid, and leave him well beaten.]

THE PROLOGUE TO THE COKES TALE.

The prologe of the Cokes Tale.

The Cook of London, whil the Reve spak,
For joye him thoughte, he clawed him on the bak.
"Ha! ha!" quod he, "for Cristes passioun,
This miller hadde a sharp conclusioun
Upon his argument of herbergage.
Wel seyde Salomon in his langage,
'Ne brynge nat every man into thyn hous,'
For herberwynge by nyghte is perilous.
Wel oghte a man avysed for to be,
Whom that be broghte into his pryvetee.
I pray to God so yeve me sorwe and care,
If evere sitthe I highte Hogge of Ware,
Herde I a millere bettre yset awerk.
He hadde a jape of malice in the derk.
But God forbede that we stynte heere,
And therfore, if ye vouche-sauf to heere
A tale of me that am a povre man,
I wol yow telle, as wel as evere I kan,
A litel jape that fil in oure citee."
Oure Hoost answerde and seide, "I graunte it thee,
Now telle on, Roger, looke that it be good,
For many a pastee hastow laten blood,
And many a Jakke of Dovere hastow soold
That hath been twies hoot and twies cold.
Of many a pilgrim hastow Cristes curs,
For of thy percely yet they fare the wors,
That they han eten with thy stubbel-goos,
For in thy shoppe is many a flye loos.

4325 whil that.

Now telle on, gentil Roger, by thy name,
But yet I pray thee, be nat wroth for game,
A man may seye ful sooth in game and pley."
"Thou seist ful sooth," quod Roger, "by my fey;
But 'sooth pley quaad pley,' as the Flemyng seith.
And ther-fore, Herry Bailly, by thy feith,
Be thou nat wrooth, er we departen heer,
Though that my tale be of an hostileer.
But nathelees I wol nat telle it yit,
But er we parte, ywis, thou shalt be quit."
And ther-with-al he lough and made cheere,
And seyde his tale, as ye shul after heere.

4359 na.

THE TALE (Unfinished).

[Perkin, a London apprentice, being dismissed by his master, seeks his companions in dice, revel and disport.]

GROUP B.

PROLOGUE OF THE MAN OF LAWE.

The wordes of the Hoost to the compaignye.

Oure Hooste saugh wel that the brighte sonne
The ark of his artificial day hath ronne
The ferthe part, and half an houre and moore;
And though he were nat depe expert in loore,
He wiste it was the eightetethe day
Of Aprill, that is messager to May;
And saugh wel, that the shadwe of every tree
Was as in lengthe the same quantitee
That was the body erect that caused it,
And therfore by the shadwe he took his wit
That Phebus, which that shoon so clere and brighte,
Degrees was fyve and fourty clombe on highte;
And for that day, as in that latitude,
It was ten at the clokke, he gan conclude,
And sodeynly he plighte his hors aboute.—
"Lordynges," quod he, "I warne yow, al this route,
The fourthe party of this day is gon.
Now for the love of God and of Seint John,
Leseth no tyme, as ferforth as ye may.
Lordynges, the tyme wasteth nyght and day,
And steleth from us, what pryvely slepynge,
And what thurgh necligence in oure wakynge,
As dooth the streem, that turneth nevere agayn,
Descendyng fro the montaigne into playn.

1 hoost. 4 *expert* ystert. 5 eighte and twentithe.

Wel kan Senec and many a philosophre
Biwaillen tyme, moore than gold in cofre.
'For losse of catel may recovered be,
But losse of tyme shendeth us,' quod he.
It wol nat come agayn, withouten drede,
Namoore than wole Malkynes maydenhede,
Whan shè hath lost it in hir wantownesse.
Lat us nat mowlen thus in ydelnesse;
Sir man of lawe," quod he, "so have ye blis,
Telle us a tale anon, as forward is.
Ye been submytted thurgh youre free assent
To stonden in this cas at my juggement.
Acquiteth yow as now of youre biheeste,
Thanne have ye do youre devoir atte leeste."
"Hooste," quod he, "depardieux ich assente,
To breke forward is nat myn entente.
Biheste is dette, and I wole holde fayn
Al my biheste, I kan no bettre sayn.
For swich lawe as a man yeveth another wight,
He sholde hymselven usen it by right;
Thus wole oure text, but nathelees certeyn
I kan right now no thrifty tale seyn;
But Chaucer, thogh he kan but lewedly
On metres and on rymyng craftily,
Hath seyd hem in swich Englissh as he kan,
Of olde tyme, as knoweth many a man.
And if he have noght seyd hem, leve brother,
In o book, he hath seyd hem in another.
For he hath toold of loveris up and doun
Mo than Ovide made of mencioun,
In hise Episteles that been ful olde;
What sholde I tellen hem, syn they ben tolde?
In youthe he made of Ceys and Alcione,
And sitthen hath he spoken of everichone
Thise noble wyves and thise loveris eke.

37 *as om.* 39 Hoost. 47 *But* That. 55 epistles. 56 telle.

Whoso that wole his large volume seke
Cleped the Seintes Legende of Cupide,
Ther may he seen the large woundes wyde
Of Lucresse, and of Babilan Tesbee,
The swerd of Dido for the false Enee,
The tree of Phillis for hir Demophon,
The pleinte of Dianire and Hermyon,
Of Adriane and of Isiphilee,
The bareyne yle stondynge in the see,
The dreynte Leandre for his Erro,
The teeris of Eleyne, and eek the wo
Of Brixseyde, and of the, Ladomea,
The crueltee of the, queene Medea,
Thy litel children hangyng by the hals
For thy Jason, that was in love so fals.
O Ypermystra, Penolopee, Alceste,
Youre wyfhede he comendeth with the beste!
But certeinly no word ne writeth he
Of thilke wikke ensample of Canacee,
That loved hir owene brother synfully—
Of swiche cursed stories I sey fy!—
Or ellis of Tyro Appollonius,
How that the cursed kyng Antiochus
Birafte his doghter of hir maydenhede,
That is so horrible a tale for to rede,
Whan he hir threw upon the pavement.
And therfore he, of ful avysement,
Nolde nevere write, in none of his sermouns,
Of swiche unkynde abhomynaciouns;
Ne I wol noon reherce, if that I may.
But of my tale how shall I doon this day?
Me were looth be likned, doutelees,
To Muses that men clepe Pierides—
Methamorphosios woot what I mene—
But nathelees, I recche noght a bene

66 Diane and of. 70 *eek om.* 71 *of om.*

Though I come after hym with hawebake,
I speke in prose, and lat him rymes make."
And with that word he, with a sobre cheere,
Bigan his tale, as ye shal after heere.

THE TALE OF THE MAN OF LAWE.

The Prologe of the Mannes Tale of Lawe.

O hateful harm, condicion of poverte!
With thurst, with coold, with hunger so confoundid!
To asken help thee shameth in thyn herte,
If thou noon aske, so soore artow ywoundid
That verray nede unwrappeth al thy wounde hid;
Maugree thyn heed thou most for indigence
Or stele, or begge, or borwe thy despence!

Thow blamest Crist, and seist ful bitterly
He mysdeparteth richesse temporal.
Thy neighebore thou wytest synfully,
And seist thou hast to lite and he hath al.
"Parfay!" seistow, "somtyme he rekene shal,
Whan that his tayl shal brennen in the gleede,
For he noght helpeth needfulle in hir neede."

Herkne what is the sentence of the wise,
"Bet is to dyen than have indigence."
Thy selve neighebor wol thee despise,
If thou be povre, farwel thy reverence!
Yet of the wise man take this sentence,
"Alle dayes of povre men been wikke;"
Be war therfore, er thou come to that prikke.

If thou be povre, thy brother hateth thee,
And alle thy freendes fleen from thee; allas,
O riche marchauntz, ful of wele been yee!
O noble, o prudent folk, as in this cas!
Youre bagges been nat fild with ambes as,
But with sys cynk, that renneth for youre chaunce,
At Cristemasse myrie may ye daunce!

113 Herke.

Ye seken lond and see for your wynnynges,
As wise folk ye knowen all thestaat
Of regnes; ye been fadres of tydynges
And tales, bothe of pees and of debaat.
I were right now of tales desolaat
Nere that a marchant, goon is many a yeere,
Me taughte a tale, which that ye shal heere.

Heere begynneth the Man of Lawe his Tale.

In Surrye whilom dwelte a compaignye
Of chapmen riche, and therto sadde and trewe,
That wyde-where senten hir spicerye,
Clothes of gold, and satyns riche of hewe.
Hir chaffare was so thrifty and so newe
That every wight hath deyntee to chaffare
With hem, and eek to sellen hem hir ware.

Now fil it, that the maistres of that sort
Han shapen hem to Rome for to wende;
Were it for chapmanhode, or for disport,
Noon oother message wolde they thider sende,
But comen hemself to Rome, this is the ende,
And in swich place as thoughte hem avantage
For hir entente, they take hir herbergage.

Sojourned han thise Marchantz in that toun
A certein tyme, as fil to hire plesance.
And so bifel, that thexcellent renoun
Of the Emperoures doghter, Dame Custance,
Reported was, with every circumstance
Unto thise Surryen marchantz in swich wyse
Fro day to day, as I shal yow devyse.

151 Emperours. 153 a wyse.

This was the commune voys of every man:
"Oure Emperour of Rome, God hym see,
A doghter hath, that syn the world bigan,
To rekene as wel hir goodnesse as beautee,
Nas nevere swich another as is shee.
I prey to God in honour hir sustene
And wolde she were of all Europe the queene!

In hir is heigh beautee, withoute pride,
Yowthe, withoute grenehede or folye,
To alle hir werkes vertu is hir gyde,
Humblesse hath slayn in hir al tirannye,
She is mirour of alle curteisye,
Hir herte is verray chambre of hoolynesse,
Hir hand ministre of fredam for almesse."

And al this voys was sooth, as God is trewe!
But now to purpos, lat us turne agayn;
Thise marchantz han doon fraught hir shippes newe,
And whan they han this blisful mayden sayn,
Hoom to Surrye been they went ful fayn,
And doon hir nedes as they han doon yoore,
And lyven in wele, I kan sey yow namoore.

Now fil it, that thise marchantz stode in grace
Of hym, that was the Sowdan of Surrye.
For whan they cam from any strange place,
He wolde, of his benigne curteisye,
Make hem good chiere, and bisily espye
Tidynges of sondry regnes, for to leere
The wondres that they myghte seen or heere.

Amonges othere thynges, specially
Thise marchantz han hym toold of dame Custance
So greet noblesse, in ernest ceriously,
That this Sowdan hath caught so greet plesance

To han hir figure in his remembrance,
That all his lust and al his bisy cure
Was for to love hir, while his lyf may dure.

Paraventure in thilke large book,
Which that men clipe the hevene, ywriten was
With sterres, whan that he his birthe took,
That he for love sholde han his deeth, allas!
For in the sterres clerer than is glas
Is writen, God woot, whoso koude it rede,
The deeth of every man, withouten drede.

In sterres many a wynter therbiforn
Was writen the deeth of Ector, Achilles,
Of Pompei, Julius, er they were born,
The strif of Thebes, and of Ercules,
Of Sampson, Turnus, and of Socrates
The deeth, but mennes wittes ben so dulle
That no wight kan wel rede it atte fulle.

This Sowdan for his privee conseil sente,
And, shortly of this matiere for to pace,
He hath to hem declared his entente
And seyde hem, certein, but he myghte have grace
To han Custance withinne a litel space,
He nas but deed; and charged hem in hye
To shapen for his lyf som remedye.

Diverse men diverse thynges seyden;
They argumenten, casten up and doun,
Many a subtil resoun forth they leyden,
They speken of magyk and abusioun
But finally, as in conclusioun,
They kan nat seen in that noon avantage,
Ne in noon oother wey, save mariage.

Thanne sawe they therin swich difficultee
By wey of reson, for to speke al playn
Bycause that ther was swich diversitee
Bitwene hir bothe lawes, that they sayn
They trowe that "no cristene prince wolde fayn
Wedden his child under oure lawes swete
That us were taught by Mahoun oure prophete."

And he answerde: "Rather than I lese
Custance, I wol be cristned, doutelees.
I moot been hires, I may noon oother chese;
I prey yow, hoold youre argumentz in pees.
Saveth my lyf, and beth noght recchelees
To geten hir that hath my lyf in cure,
For in this wo I may nat longe endure."

What nedeth gretter dilatacioun?
I seye, by tretys and embassadrye
And by the popes mediacioun,
And al the chirche and al the chivalrie,
That in destruccioun of Mawmettrie
And in encrees of Cristes lawe deere,
They been acorded, so as ye shal heere,

How that the Sowdan and his baronage
And alle hise liges sholde ycristned be—
And he shal han Custance in mariage,
And certein gold, I noot what quantitee,
And heerto founden suffisant suretee.
This same accord was sworn on eyther syde.
Now, faire Custance, almyghty God thee gyde!

Now wolde som men waiten, as I gesse,
That I sholde tellen al the purveiance
That themperour, of his grete noblesse,

243 sufficient.

Hath shapen for his doghter dame Custance;
Wel may men knowen that so greet ordinance
May no man tellen in a litel clause
As was arrayed for so heigh a cause.

Bisshopes been shapen with hir for to wende,
Lordes, ladies, knyghtes of renoun,
And oother folk ynogh, this is the ende,
And notified is, thurghout the toun,
That every wight with greet devocioun
Sholde preyen Crist, that he this mariage
Receyve in gree, and spede this viage.

The day is comen of hir departynge,
I seye, the woful day fatal is come,
That ther may be no lenger tariynge,
But forthward they hem dressen, alle and some.
Custance, that was with sorwe al overcome,
Ful pale arist, and dresseth hir to wende,
For wel she seeth ther is noon oother ende.

Allas, what wonder is it thogh she wepte,
That shal be sent to strange nacioun
Fro freendes that so tendrely hir kepte,
And to be bounden under subjeccioun
Of oon, she knoweth nat his condicioun?
Housbondes been alle goode, and han ben yoore,
That knowen wyves! I dar sey yow namoore.

"Fader," she seyde, "thy wrecched child Custance,
Thy yonge doghter, fostred up so softe,
And ye my mooder, my soverayn plesance,
Over alle thyng, out-taken Crist on-lofte,
Custance, youre child, hir recomandeth ofte
Unto your grace, for I shal to Surrye
Ne shal I nevere seen yow moore with eye.

253 thende.

Allas! unto the barbre nacioun
I moste goon, syn that it is youre wille,
But Crist, that starf for our savacioun,
So yeve me grace hise heestes to fulfille,—
I, wrecche womman, no fors though I spille.
Wommen are born to thraldom and penance,
And to been under mannes governance."

I trowe, at Troye whan Pirrus brak the wal,
Or Ilion brende, ne at Thebes the Citee,
Ne at Rome for the harm thurgh Hanybal
That Romayns hath venquysshed tymes thre,
Nas herd swich tendre wepyng for pitee
As in the chambre was, for hir departynge;
But forth she moot, wher-so she wepe or synge.

O firste moevyng crueel firmanent,
With thy diurnal sweigh, that crowdest ay
And hurlest al from Est til Occident
That naturelly wolde holde another way,
Thy crowdyng set the hevene in swich array
At the bigynnyng of this fiers viage,
That crueel Mars hath slayn this mariage.

Infortunat ascendent tortuous,
Of which the lord is helplees falle, allas!
Out of his angle into the derkeste hous.
O Mars! O Atazir! as in this cas,
O fieble Moone, unhappy been thy paas!
Thou knyttest thee, ther thou art nat receyved;
Ther thou were weel, fro thennes artow weyved.—

Imprudent Emperour of Rome, allas!
Was ther no philosophre in al thy toun?
Is no tyme bet than oother in swich cas?

289 *ne at om.* 290 Nat.

Of viage is ther noon eleccioun,
Namely to folk of heigh condicioun,
Noght whan a roote is of a burthe yknowe?
Allas, we been to lewed or to slowe!

To ship is brought this woful faire mayde
Solempnely, with every circumstance,
"Now Jesu Crist be with yow alle," she seyde.
Ther nys namoore but, "Farewel faire Custance!"
She peyneth hir to make good contenance,
And forth I lete hir saille in this manere,
And turne I wole agayn to my matere.

The mooder of the Sowdan, welle of vyices,
Espied hath hir sones pleyne entente,
How he wol lete hise olde sacrifices,
And right anon she for hir conseil sente,
And they been come, to knowe what she mente,
And whan assembled was this folk in feere,
She sette hir doun, and seyde as ye shal heere.

"Lordes," quod she, "ye knowen everichon,
How that my sone in point is for to lete
The hooly lawes of oure Alkaron,
Yeven by Goddes message, Makomete.
But oon avow to grete God I heete,
The lyf shal rather out of my body sterte,
Than Makometes lawe out of myn herte!

What sholde us tyden of this newe lawe
But thraldom to our bodies, and penance,
And afterward in helle to be drawe
For we reneyed Mahoun oure creance?
But lordes, wol ye maken assurance
As I shal seyn, assentynge to my loore,
And I shal make us sauf for everemoore."

316 *brought* come. 330 she seyde.

They sworen and assenten every man
To lyve with hir, and dye, and by hir stonde,
And everich in the beste wise he kan
To strengthen hir shal alle hise frendes fonde,
And she hath this emprise ytake on honde,
Which ye shal heren, that I shal devyse.
And to hem alle she spak right in this wyse:

"We shul first feyne us cristendom to take,—
Coold water shal nat greve us but a lite—
And I shal swich a feeste and revel make,
That as I trowe I shal the Sowdan quite;
For thogh his wyf be cristned never so white,
She shal have nede to wasshe awey the rede,
Thogh she a fontful water with hir lede!"

O Sowdanesse, roote of iniquitee!
Virago, thou Semyrame the secounde!
O serpent under femynynytee,
Lik to the serpent depe in helle ybounde!
O feyned womman, al that may confounde
Vertu and innocence thurgh thy malice
Is bred in thee, as nest of every vice!

O Sathan, envious syn thilke day
That thou were chaced from oure heritage,
Wel knowestow to wommen the olde way!
Thou madest Eva brynge us in servage;
Thou wolt fordoon this cristen mariage.
Thyn instrument, so weylawey the while!
Makestow of wommen, whan thou wolt bigile!

This Sowdanesse, whom I thus blame and warie,
Leet prively hir conseil goon hir way.
What sholde I in this tale lenger tarie?
She rydeth to the Sowdan on a day

And seyde hym, that she wolde reneye hir lay,
And cristendom of preestes handes fonge,
Repentynge hir she hethen was so longe;

Bisechynge hym to doon hir that honour
That she moste han the cristen folk to feeste.
"To plesen hem I wol do my labour."
The Sowdan seith, "I wol doon at youre heeste,"
And knelynge thanketh hir of that requeste.
So glad he was, he nyste what to seye;
She kiste hir sone, and hoome she gooth hir weye.

Explicit prima pars.

Sequitur pars secunda.

Arryved been this cristen folk to londe,
In Surrye, with a greet solempne route,
And hastifliche this Sowdan sente his sonde
First to his mooder and all the regne aboute,
And seyde his wyf was comen, oute of doute,
And preyde hir for to ryde agayn the queene,
The honour of his regne to susteene.

Greet was the prees, and riche was tharray
Of Surryens and Romayns met yfeere;
The mooder of the Sowdan, riche and gay,
Receyveth hir with also glad a cheere
As any mooder myghte hir doghter deere,
And to the nexte citee ther bisyde
A softe paas solempnely they ryde.

Noght trowe I the triumphe of Julius,
Of which that Lucan maketh swich a boost,
Was roialler, ne moore curius
Than was thassemblee of this blisful hoost.

402 *ne* or.

But this scorpioun, this wikked goost,
The Sowdanesse, for all hir flaterynge
Caste under this ful mortally to stynge.

The Sowdan comth hymself soone after this
So roially, that wonder is to telle,
And welcometh hir with alle joye and blis,
And thus in murthe and joye I lete hem dwelle—
The fruyt of this matiere is that I telle.—
Whan tyme cam, men thoughte it for the beste,
The revel stynte, and men goon to hir reste.

The tyme cam, this olde Sowdanesse
Ordeyned hath this feeste of which I tolde,
And to the feeste cristen folk hem dresse
In general, ye, bothe yonge and olde.
Heere may men feeste and roialtee biholde,
And deyntees mo than I kan yow devyse;
But al to deere they boghte it er they ryse!

O sodeyn wo, that evere art successour
To worldly blisse, spreynd with bitternesse!
The ende of the joye of oure worldly labour!
Wo occupieth the fyn of oure gladnesse!
Herke this conseil for thy sikernesse,
Upon thy glade day have in thy minde
The unwar wo or harm that comth bihynde.

For shortly for to tellen at o word,
The Sowdan and the cristen everichone
Been al tohewe and stiked at the bord,
But it were oonly dame Custance allone.
This olde Sowdanesse, cursed krone,
Hath with hir freendes doon this cursed dede,
For she hirself wolde all the contree lede.

428 For soothly.

Ne was ther Surryen noon, that was converted,
That of the conseil of the Sowdan woot,
That he nas al tohewe er he asterted.
And Custance han they take anon foot-hoot
And in a ship all steerelees, God woot,
They han hir set, and biddeth hir lerne saille
Out of Surrye agaynward to Ytaille.

A certein tresor that she thider ladde,
And, sooth to seyn, vitaille greet plentee
They han hir yeven, and clothes eek she hadde,
And forth she sailleth in the salte see.
O my Custance, ful of benignytee,
O emperoures yonge doghter deere,
He that is lord of Fortune be thy steere!

She blesseth hir, and with ful pitous voys
Unto the croys of Crist thus seyde she,
"O cleere, o welful auter, hooly croys,
Reed of the lambes blood, ful of pitee,
That wesshe the world fro the olde iniquitee,
Me fro the feend and fro his clawes kepe,
That day that I shal drenchen in the depe.

Victorious tree, protecciouN of trewe,
That oonly worthy were for to bere
The kyng of hevene with his woundes newe,
The white lamb that hurt was with the spere,
Flemer of feendes out of hym and here
On which thy lymes feithfully extenden,
Me keep, and yif me myght my lyf tamenden."

Yeres and dayes fleteth this creature
Thurghout the See of Grece unto the Strayte
Of Marrok, as it was hir aventure.

435 *ther om.* 442 *thider* with hir. 447 emperours. 451 *welful* woful. 462 *keepe* helpe.

On many a sory meel now may she bayte;
After hir deeth ful often may she wayte,
Er that the wilde wawes wol hire dryve
Unto the place ther she shal arryve.

Men myghten asken why she was nat slayn?
Eek at the feeste who myghte hir body save?
And I answere to that demande agayn,
Who saved Danyel in the horrible cave,
Ther every wight save he, maister and knave,
Was with the leoun frete, er he asterte?
No wight but God, that he bar in his herte.

God liste to shewe his wonderful myracle
In hir, for we sholde seen his myghty werkis.
Crist, which that is to every harm triacle,
By certeine meenes ofte, as knowen clerkis,
Dooth thyng for certein ende, that ful derk is
To mannes wit, that for oure ignorance
Ne konne noght knowe his prudent purveiance.

Now, sith she was nat at the feeste yslawe,
Who kepte hir fro the drenchyng in the see?
Who kepte Jonas in the fisshes mawe
Til he was spouted up at Nynyvee?
Wel may men knowe it was no wight but he
That kepte peple Ebrayk from hir drenchynge,
With drye feet thurghout the see passynge.

Who bad the foure spirites of tempest,
That power han tanoyen lond and see,
"Bothe north and south, and also west and est,
Anoyeth neither see, ne land, ne tree?"
Soothly, the comandour of that was he,
That fro the tempest ay this womman kepte,
As wel eek when she wook as whan she slepte.

497 *eek om.*

Where myghte this womman mete and drynke have?
Thre yeer and moore how lasteth hir vitaille?
Who fedde the Egypcien Marie in the cave,
Or in desert? no wight but Crist sanz faille.
Fyve thousand folk it was as greet mervaille
With loves fyve and fisshes two to feede;
God sente his foyson at hir grete neede.

She dryveth forth into oure occian
Thurghout oure wilde see, til atte laste
Under an hoold that nempnen I ne kan,
Fer in Northhumberlond, the wawe hir caste,
And in the sond hir ship stiked so faste
That thennes wolde it noght of al a tyde,
The wyl of Crist was that she sholde abyde.

The constable of the castel doun is fare
To seen his wrak, and al the ship he soghte,
And foond this wery womman ful of care,
He foond also the tresor that she broghte,
In hir langage mercy she bisoghte,
The lyf out of hire body for to twynne,
Hir to delivere of wo that she was inne.

A maner Latyn corrupt was hir speche,
But algates ther-by was she understonde.
The constable, whan hym lyst no lenger seche,
This woful womman broghte he to the londe.
She kneleth doun and thanketh Goddes sonde;
But what she was, she wolde no man seye,
For foul ne fair, thogh that she sholde deye.

She seyde, she was so mazed in the see
That she forgat hir mynde, by hir trouthe.
The constable hath of hir so greet pitee,
And eke his wyf, that they wepen for routhe.

She was so diligent withouten slouthe
To serve and plesen everich in that place,
That alle hir loven that looken on hir face.

This constable and dame Hermengyld his wyf
Were payens, and that contree every-where;
But Hermengyld loved hir right as hir lyf,
And Custance hath so longe sojourned there
In orisons with many a bitter teere,
Til Jesu hath converted thurgh his grace
Dame Hermengyld, constablesse of that place.

In al that lond no cristen dorste route,
Alle cristen folk been fled fro that contree
Thurgh payens that conquereden al aboute
The plages of the North by land and see.
To Walys fledde the Cristyanytee
Of olde Britons, dwellynge in this Ile;
Ther was hir refut for the meene-while.

But yet nere cristene Britons so exiled
That ther nere somme that in hir privetee
Honoured Crist, and hethen folk bigiled,
And ny the castel swiche ther dwelten three;
That oon of hem was blynd, and myghte nat see,
But it were with thilke eyen of his mynde,
With whiche men seen, after that they ben blynde.

Bright was the sonne as in that someres day,
For which the constable and his wyf also
And Custance han ytake the righte way
Toward the see, a furlong wey or two,
To pleyen, and to romen, to and fro,
And in hir walk this blynde man they mette,
Croked and oold, with eyen faste yshette.

531 plese. 553 *after* whan.

"In name of Crist," cride this olde Britoun,
"Dame Hermengyld, yif me my sighte agayn."
This lady weex affrayed of the soun,
Lest that hir housbonde, shortly for to sayn,
Wolde hir for Jesu Cristes love han slayn,
Til Custance made hir boold, and bad hir wirche
The wyl of Crist, as doghter of his chirche.

The constable weex abasshed of that sight,
And seyde, "What amounteth all this fare!"
Custance answerde, "Sire, it is Cristes myght,
That helpeth folk out of the feendes snare."
And so ferforth she gan oure lay declare,
That she the constable, er that it were eve,
Converteth, and on Crist maketh hym bileve.

This constable was no-thyng lord of this place
Of which I speke, ther he Custance fond;
But kepte it strongly many wyntres space
Under Alla, kyng of al Northhumbrelond,
That was ful wys and worthy of his hond
Agayn the Scottes, as men may wel heere;—
But turne I wole agayn to my mateere.

Sathan, that ever us waiteth to bigile,
Saugh of Custance al hir perfeccioun
And caste anon how he myghte quite hir while;
And made a yong knyght, that dwelte in that toun,
Love hir so hoote of foul affeccioun
That verraily hym thoughte he sholde spille,
But he of hir myghte ones have his wille.

He woweth hir, but it availleth noght,
She wolde do no synne, by no weye;
And for despit he compassed in his thoght
To maken hir on shameful deeth to deye.

He wayteth whan the constable was aweye
And pryvely upon a nyght he crepte
In Hermengyldes chambre whil she slepte.

Wery, for-waked in hir orisouns,
Slepeth Custance, and Hermengyld also.
This knyght, thurgh Sathanas temptaciouns,
All softely is to the bed ygo,
And kitte the throte of Hermengyld atwo,
And leyde the blody knyf by dame Custance,
And wente his wey, ther God yeve hym meschance!

Soone after cometh this constable hoom agayn,
And eek Alla, that kyng was of that lond,
And saugh his wyf despitously yslayn,
For which ful ofte he weep and wroong his hond,
And in the bed the blody knyf he fond
By Dame Custance; allas, what myghte she seye?
For verray wo hir wit was al aweye!

To kyng Alla was toold al this meschance,
And eek the tyme, and where, and in what wise
That in a ship was founden dame Custance,
As heer-biforn that ye han herd devyse.
The kynges herte of pitee gan agryse,
Whan he saugh so benigne a creature
Falle in disese and in mysaventure.

For as the lomb toward his deeth is broght,
So stant this innocent bifore the kyng.
This false knyght, that hath this tresoun wroght,
Berth hir on hond that she hath doon thys thyng,
But nathelees, ther was greet moornyng
Among the peple, and seyn, they kan nat gesse
That she had doon so greet a wikkednesse;

598 Sathans.

For they han seyn hir evere so vertuous,
And lovyng Hermengyld right as hir lyf.
Of this baar witnesse everich in that hous
Save he that Hermengyld slow with his knyf.
This gentil kyng hath caught a greet motyf
Of this witnesse, and thoghte he wolde enquere
Depper in this, a trouthe for to lere.

Allas, Custance, thou hast no champioun!
Ne fighte kanstow noght, so weylaway!
But he, that starf for our redempcioun,
And boond Sathan—and yet lith ther he lay—
So be thy stronge champion this day!
For but if Crist open myracle kithe,
Withouten gilt thou shalt be slayn as swithe.

She sette hir doun on knees, and thus she sayde,
"Immortal God, that savedest Susanne
Fro false blame, and thou, merciful Mayde,
Marie I meene, doghter to Seynte Anne,
Bifore whos child angeles synge Osanne,
If I be giltlees of this felonye,
My socour be, for ellis shal I dye."

Have ye nat seyn som tyme a pale face
Among a prees, of hym that hath be lad
Toward his deeth, wher as hym gat no grace,
And swich a colour in his face hath had,
Men myghte knowe his face, that was bistad,
Amonges alle the faces in that route?
So stant Custance, and looketh hir aboute.

O queenes, lyvynge in prosperitee,
Duchesses, and ladyes everichone,
Haveth som routhe on hir adversitee;
An emperoures doghter stant allone,

640 fals. 655 emperours.

She hath no wight to whom to make hir mone.
O blood roial, that stondest in this drede,
Fer been thy freendes at thy grete nede!

This Alla kyng hath swich compassioun,
As gentil herte is fulfild of pitee,
That from hise eyen ran the water doun.
"Now hastily do fecche a book," quod he,
"And if this knyght wol sweren how that she
This womman slow, yet wol we us avyse,
Whom that we wole, that shal been oure justise."

A Britoun book, written with Evaungiles,
Was fet, and on this book he swoor anoon
She gilty was, and in the meene-whiles
An hand hym smoot upon the nekke-boon,
That doun he fil atones, as a stoon;
And bothe hise eyen broste out of his face,
In sighte of every body in that place.

A voys was herd in general audience,
And seyde, "Thou hast desclaundred giltelees
The doghter of hooly chirche in heigh presence,
Thus hastou doon, and yet holde I my pees."
Of this mervaille agast was al the prees,
As mazed folk they stoden everichone
For drede of wreche, save Custance allone.

Greet was the drede and eek the repentance
Of hem that hadden wronge suspecioun
Upon this sely innocent, Custance;
And for this miracle, in conclusioun,
And by Custances mediacioun,
The kyng, and many another in that place,
Converted was, thanked be Cristes grace.

674 giltlees.

This false knyght was slayn for his untrouthe,
By juggement of Alla hastifly—
And yet Custance hadde of his deeth greet routhe—
And after this Jesus, of His mercy,
Made Alla wedden ful solempnely
This hooly mayden, that is so bright and sheene,
And thus hath Crist ymaad Custance a queene.

But who was woful, if I shal nat lye,
Of this weddyng but Donegild, and namo,
The kynges mooder, ful of tirannye?
Hir thoughte hir cursed herte brast atwo,
She wolde noght hir sone had do so,
Hir thoughte a despit, that he sholde take
So strange a creature unto his make.

Me list nat of the chaf nor of the stree
Maken so long a tale, as of the corn;
What sholde I tellen of the roialtee
At mariages, or which cours goth biforn,
Who bloweth in the trumpe, or in an horn?
The fruyt of every tale is for to seye;
They ete, and drynke, and daunce, and synge, and pleye.

They goon to bedde, as it was skile and right,
For thogh that wyves be ful hooly thynges,
They moste take in pacience at nyght
Swiche manere necessaries as been plesynges
To folk that han ywedded hem with rynges,
And leye a lite hir hoolynesse aside
As for the tyme, it may no bet bitide.

On hir he gat a knave childe anon,
And to a bisshop and his constable eke
He took his wyf to kepe, whan he is gon

701 or.

To Scotlondward, his foomen for to seke.
Now faire Custance, that is so humble and meke,
So longe is goon with childe, til that stille
She halt hire chambre, abidyng Cristes wille.

The tyme is come, a knave child she beer,
Mauricius at the fontstoon they hym calle.
This constable dooth forth come a messageer,
And wroot unto his kyng, that cleped was Alle,
How that this blisful tidyng is bifalle,
And othere tidynges spedeful for to seye;
He taketh the lettre, and forth he gooth his weye.

This messager, to doon his avantage,
Unto the kynges mooder rideth swithe,
And salueth hir ful faire in his langage,
"Madame," quod he, "ye may be glad and blithe,
And thanketh God an hundred thousand sithe.
My lady queene hath child, withouten doute,
To joye and blisse to al this regne aboute.

Lo, heere the lettres seled of this thyng,
That I moot bere with al the haste I may.
If ye wol aught unto youre sone, the kyng,
I am youre servant bothe nyght and day."
Donegild answerde, "As now at this tyme, nay,
But heere al nyght I wol thou take thy reste,
Tomorwe wol I seye thee what me leste."

This messager drank sadly ale and wyn,
And stolen were hise lettres prively
Out of his box, whil he sleep as a swyn;
And countrefeted was ful subtilly
Another lettre wroght ful synfully,
Unto the kyng direct of this mateere
Fro his constable, as ye shal after heere.

The lettre spak, the queene delivered was
Of so horrible a feendly creature
That in the castel noon so hardy was
That any while dorste ther endure;
The mooder was an elf, by aventure,
Ycomen by charmes or by sorcerie,
And every wight hateth hir compaignye.

Wo was this kyng whan he this lettre had sayn,
But to no wight he tolde his sorwes soore,
But of his owene hand he wroot agayn:
"Welcome the sonde of Crist for everemoore
To me, that am now lerned in his loore.
Lord, welcome be thy lust and thy plesaunce,
My lust I putte al in thyn ordinaunce.

Kepeth this child, al be it foul or feire,
And eek my wyf, unto myn hoom-comynge;
Crist, whan hym list, may sende me an heir
Moore agreable than this to my likynge."
This lettre he seleth, pryvely wepynge,
Which to the messager was take soone
And forth he gooth, ther is namoore to doone.

O messager, fulfild of dronkenesse,
Strong is thy breeth, thy lymes faltren ay,
And thou biwreyest alle secreenesse.
Thy mynde is lorn, thou janglest as a jay,
Thy face is turned in a newe array;
Ther dronkenesse regneth in any route,
Ther is no conseil hyd, withouten doute.

O Donegild, I ne have noon Englissh digne
Unto thy malice and thy tirannye;
And therfore to the feend I thee resigne,
Lat hym enditen of thy traitorie!

756 euerich hateth.

Fy, mannysh, fy! O nay, by God, I lye!
Fy, feendlych spirit! for I dar wel telle,
Thogh thou heere walke, thy spirit is in helle.

This messager comth fro the kyng agayn,
And at the kynges moodres court he lighte
And she was of this messager ful fayn,
And plesed hym in al that ever she myghte.
He drank, and wel his girdel underpighte.
He slepeth, and he fnorteth in his gyse
Al nyght until the sonne gan aryse.

Eft were hise lettres stolen everychon
And countrefeted lettres in this wyse,
"The king comandeth his constable anon
Up peyne of hangyng and on heigh juyse
That he ne sholde suffren in no wyse
Custance inwith his reawme for tabyde,
Thre dayes and o quarter of a tyde.

But in the same ship as he hir fond,
Hir and hir yonge sone, and al hir geere,
He sholde putte, and croude hir fro the lond,
And chargen hir she never eft coome theere."
O my Custance, wel may thy goost have fere,
And slepynge in thy dreem been in penance,
Whan Donegild cast al this ordinance.

This messager, on morwe whan he wook,
Unto the Castel halt the nexte way,
And to the constable he the lettre took.
And whan that he this pitous lettre say,
Ful ofte he seyde, "Allas and weylaway!"
"Lord Crist," quod he, "how may this world endure,
So ful of synne is many a creature?

791 til.

O myghty God, if that it be thy wille,
Sith thou art rightful juge, how may it be
That thou wolt suffren innocentz to spille,
And wikked folk regnen in prosperitee?
O goode Custance, allas, so wo is me,
That I moot be thy tormentour, or deye
On shames deeth! Ther is noon oother weye!"

Wepen bothe yonge and olde in al that place,
Whan that the kyng this cursed lettre sente,
And Custance, with a deedly pale face,
The ferthe day toward the ship she wente;
But nathelees she taketh in good entente
The wyl of Crist, and knelynge on the stronde,
She seyde, "Lord, ay welcome be thy sonde!

He that me kepte fro the false blame,
While I was on the lond amonges yow,
He kan me kepe from harm and eek fro shame
In salte see, al thogh I se noght how.
As strong as evere he was, he is yet now;
In hym triste I, and in his mooder deere,
That is to me my seyl and eek my steere."

Hir litel child lay wepyng in hir arm,
And knelynge, pitously to hym she seyde,
"Pees, litel sone, I wol do thee noon harm."
With that hir coverchief of hir heed she breyde,
And over hise litel eyen she it leyde,
And in hir arm she lulleth it ful faste,
And into hevene hir eyen up she caste.

"Mooder," quod she, "and mayde bright, Marie,
Sooth is that thurgh wommanes eggement
Mankynde was lorn and damned ay to dye,
For which thy child was on a croys yrent;

837 *of* over.

Thy blisful eyen sawe al his torment;
Thanne is ther no comparison bitwene
Thy wo, and any wo man may sustene.

Thow sawe thy child yslayn bifore thyne eyen,
And yet now lyveth my litel child, parfay.
Now, lady bright, to whom alle woful cryen,
Thow glorie of wommanhede, thow faire may,
Thow haven of refut, brighte sterre of day,
Rewe on my child, that of thy gentillesse
Ruest on every reweful in distresse.

O litel child, allas, what is thy gilt,
That nevere wroghtest synne as yet, pardee!
Why wil thyn harde fader han thee spilt?
O mercy, deere Constable," quod she,
"As lat my litel child dwelle heer with thee;
And if thou darst nat saven hym for blame,
Yet kys hym ones in his fadres name."

Therwith she looketh bakward to the londe,
And seyde, "Farewel, housbonde routhelees!"
And up she rist, and walketh doun the stronde,
Toward the ship. Hir folweth al the prees,
And evere she preyeth hir child to holde his pees,
And taketh hir leve, and with an hooly entente
She blisseth hir, and into ship she wente.

Vitailled was the ship, it is no drede,
Habundantly for hir ful longe space;
And othere necessaries that sholde nede
She hadde ynogh, heried be Goddes grace;
For wynd and weder almyghty God purchace,
And brynge hir hoom, I kan no bettre seye!
But in the see she dryveth forth hir weye.

Explicit secunda pars.

849 *litel om.*

Sequitur pars tercia.

Alla the kyng comth hoom, soone after this,
Unto his castel of the which I tolde,
And asketh where his wyf and his child is.
The constable gan aboute his herte colde,
And pleynly al the manere he hym tolde,
As ye han herd, I kan telle it no bettre;
And sheweth the kyng his seel and eek his lettre,

And seyde, "Lord, as ye comanded me,
Up peyne of deeth, so have I doon, certein."
This messager tormented was, til he
Moste biknowe, and tellen plat and pleyn
Fro nyght to nyght in what place he had leyn,
And thus by wit and sotil enquerynge
Ymagined was, by whom this harm gan sprynge.

The hand was knowe that the lettre wroot,
And al the venym of this cursed dede,
But in what wise certeinly I noot.
Theffect is this, that Alla, out of drede,
His mooder slow, that may men pleynly rede,
For that she traitoure was to hir ligeance,
Thus endeth olde Donegild, with meschance!

The sorwe that this Alla, nyght and day,
Maketh for his wyf, and for his child also,
Ther is no tonge that it telle may—
But now wol I unto Custance go,
That fleteth in the see in peyne and wo,
Fyve yeer and moore, as liked Cristes sonde,
Er that hir ship approched unto londe.

Under an hethen castel, atte laste,
Of which the name in my text noght I fynde,
Custance and eek hir child the see upcaste.

882 *eek om.* 903 the londe.

Almyghty god that saved al mankynde,
Have on Custance and on hir child som mynde,
That fallen is in hethen hand eft-soone,
In point to spille, as I shal telle yow soone.

Doun fro the castel comth ther many a wight
To gauren on this ship and on Custance,
But shortly from the castel on a nyght
The lordes styward, God yeve hym meschance!—
A theef that hadde reneyed oure creance,
Cam into the ship allone, and seyde he sholde
Hir lemman be, wherso she wolde or nolde.

Wo was this wrecched womman tho bigon!
Hir child cride, and she cride pitously,
But blisful Marie heelp hir right anon,
For with hir struglyng wel and myghtily,
The theef fil over bord al sodeynly,
And in the see he dreynte for vengeance,
And thus hath Crist unwemmed kept Custance.

O foule lust of luxurie, lo, thyn ende!
Nat oonly that thou feyntest mannes mynde,
But verraily thou wolt his body shende.
Thende of thy werk or of thy lustes blynde
Is compleynyng; hou many oon may men fynde,
That noght for werk somtyme, but for thentente
To doon this synne, been outher slayn or shente!

How may this wayke womman han this strengthe
Hir to defende agayn this renegat?
O Golias, unmesurable of lengthe,
Hou myghte David make thee so maat,
So yong, and of armure so desolaat?
Hou dorste he looke upon thy dredful face?
Wel may men seen, it nas but Goddes grace!

Who yaf Judith corage or hardynesse
To sleen hym, Olofernus, in his tente,
And to deliveren out of wrecchednesse
The peple of God? I seye, for this entente
That right as God spirit of vigour sente
To hem, and saved hem out of meschance,
So sente he myght and vigour to Custance.

Forth gooth hir ship thurghout the narwe mouth
Of Jubaltar and Septe, dryvynge alway,
Somtyme west, and somtyme north and south,
And somtyme est, ful many a wery day;
Til Cristes mooder—blessed be she ay!—
Hath shapen, thurgh hir endelees goodnesse,
To make an ende of al hir hevynesse.

Now lat us stynte of Custance but a throwe,
And speke we of the Romayn Emperour,
That out of Surrye hath by lettres knowe
The slaughtre of cristen folk, and dishonour
Doon to his doghter by a fals traytour,
I mene the cursed wikked Sowdanesse,
That at the feeste leet sleen both moore and lesse;

For which this emperour hath sent anon
His senatour, with roial ordinance
And othere lordes, God woot many oon,
On Surryens to taken heigh vengeance.
They brennen, sleen, and brynge hem to meschance
Ful many a day, but shortly, this is thende,
Hoomward to Rome they shapen hem to wende.

This senatour repaireth with victorie
To Romeward saillynge ful roially,
And mette the ship dryvynge, as seith the storie,
In which Custance sit ful pitously.

940 Oloferne.

No thyng ne knew he what she was, ne why
She was in swich array, ne she nyl seye
Of hir estat, thogh that she sholde deye.

He bryngeth hir to Rome, and to his wyf
He yaf hir, and hir yonge sone also,
And with the senatour she ladde hir lyf.
Thus kan oure Lady bryngen out of wo
Woful Custance, and many another mo.
And longe tyme dwelled she in that place,
In hooly werkes evere, as was hir grace.

The senatoures wyf hir aunte was,
But for all that she knew hir never the moore—
I wol no lenger tarien in this cas,
But to kyng Alla, which I spake of yoore,
That wepeth for his wyf and siketh soore,
I wol retourne, and lete I wol Custance
Under the senatoures governance.

Kyng Alla, which that hadde his mooder slayn,
Upon a day fil in swich repentance
That, if I shortly tellen shal and playn,
To Rome he comth, to receyven his penance,
And putte hym in the popes ordinance
In heigh and logh, and Jesu Crist bisoghte
Foryeve hise wikked werkes that he wroghte.

The fame anon thurgh Rome toun is born
How Alla kyng shal comen on pilgrymage,
By herbergeours that wenten hym biforn,
For which the Senatour, as was usage,
Rood hym agayns, and many of his lynage,
As wel to shewen his heighe magnificence
As to doon any kyng a reverence.

971 *ne om.* 973 *that om.* 981, 987 senatours.

Greet cheere dooth this noble Senatour
To kyng Alla, and he to hym also,
Everich of hem dooth oother greet honour;
And so bifel, that inwith a day or two
This senatour is to kyng Alla go
To feste; and shortly, if I shal nat lye,
Custances sone wente in his compaignye.

Som men wolde seyn, at requeste of Custance
This senatour hath lad this child to feeste;
I may nat tellen every circumstance,
Be as be may, ther was he at the leeste,
But sooth is this, that at his moodres heeste
Biforn Alla durynge the metes space,
The child stood lookynge in the kynges face.

This Alla kyng hath of this child greet wonder,
And to the senatour he seyde anon,
"Whos is that faire child, that stondeth yonder?"
"I noot," quod he, "by God and by Seint John!
A mooder he hath, but fader hath he noon,
That I of woot." But shortly, in a stounde,
He tolde Alla how that this child was founde.

"But God woot," quod this senatour also,
"So vertuous a lyver in my lyf
Ne saugh I nevere as she, ne herde of mo
Of worldly wommen, mayde, ne of wyf;
I dar wel seyn, hir hadde levere a knyf
Thurghout hir brest, than ben a womman wikke,
There is no man koude brynge hir to that prikke."

Now was this child as lyke unto Custance,
As possible is a creature to be.
This Alla hath the face in remembrance
Of dame Custance, and theron mused he,

If that the childes mooder were aught she
That is his wyf; and prively he sighte
And spedde hym fro the table that he myghte.

"Parfay," thoghte he, "fantome is in myn heed.
I oghte deme, of skilful juggement,
That in the salte see my wyf is deed."
And afterward he made his argument:
"What woot I, if that Crist have hyder ysent
My wyf by see, as wel as he hir sente
To my contree fro thennes that she wente?"

And, after noon, hoom with the senatour
Goth Alla, for to seen this wonder chaunce.
This senatour dooth Alla greet honour,
And hastifly he sente after Custance.
But trusteth weel, hir liste nat to daunce
Whan that she wiste wherfore was that sonde;
Unnethe upon hir feet she myghte stonde.

Whan Alla saugh his wyf, faire he hir grette,
And weep, that it was routhe for to see.
For at the firste look he on hir sette,
He knew wel verraily that it was she.
And she for sorwe as doumb stant as a tree,
So was hir herte shet in hir distresse,
Whan she remembred his unkyndenesse.

Twyes she swowned in his owene sighte.
He weep, and hym excuseth pitously.
"Now God," quod he, "and alle hise halwes brighte
So wisly on my soule as have mercy,
That of youre harm as giltelees am I
As is Maurice my sone, so lyk youre face;
Elles the feend me fecche out of this place!"

1060 *alle om.* 1062 giltlees.

Long was the sobbyng and the bitter peyne
Er that hir woful hertes myghte cesse,
Greet was the pitee for to heere hem pleyne,
Thurgh whiche pleintes gan hir wo encresse.
I pray yow alle my labour to relesse;
I may nat telle hir wo until tomorwe,
I am so wery for to speke of sorwe.

But finally, whan that the sothe is wist,
That Alla giltelees was of hir wo,
I trowe an hundred tymes been they kist,
And swich a blisse is ther bitwix hem two,
That save the joye that lasteth everemo
Ther is noon lyk that any creature
Hath seyn, or shal, whil that the world may dure.

Tho preyde she hir housbonde mekely,
In relief of hir longe pitous pyne,
That he wolde preye hir fader specially
That, of his magestee, he wolde enclyne
To vouchesauf som day with hym to dyne.
She preyde hym eek, he wolde by no weye
Unto hir fader no word of hir seye.

Som men wolde seyn, how that the child Maurice
Dooth this message unto this emperour,
But, as I gesse, Alla was nat so nyce
To hym that was of so sovereyn honour,
As he that is of cristen folk the flour,
Sente any child, but it is bet to deeme
He wente hymself, and so it may wel seeme.

This emperour hath graunted gentilly
To come to dyner, as he hym bisoughte,
And wel rede I he looked bisily

1073 giltlees.

Upon this child, and on his doghter thoghte.
Alla goth to his in, and as him oghte
Arrayed for this feste in every wise
As ferforth as his konnyng may suffise.

The morwe cam, and Alla gan hym dresse
And eek his wyf, this emperour to meete,
And forth they ryde in joye and in gladnesse,
And whan she saugh hir fader in the strete,
She lighte doun and falleth hym to feete.
"Fader," quod she, "youre yonge child Custance
Is now ful clene out of youre remembrance.

I am youre doghter Custance," quod she,
"That whilom ye han sent unto Surrye.
It am I, fader, that in the salte see
Was put allone, and dampned for to dye.
Now goode fader, mercy I yow crye,
Sende me namoore unto noon hethenesse,
But thonketh my lord heere of his kyndenesse."

Who kan the pitous joye tellen al
Bitwixe hem thre, syn they been thus ymette?
But of my tale make an ende I shal,
The day goth faste, I wol no lenger lette.
This glade folk to dyner they hem sette,
In joye and blisse at mete I lete hem dwelle,
A thousand foold wel moore than I kan telle.

This child Maurice was sithen emperour
Maad by the pope, and lyved cristenly.
To Cristes chirche he dide greet honour;
But I lete all his storie passen by—
Of Custance is my tale specially—
In the olde Romayn geestes may men fynde
Maurices lyf, I bere it noght in mynde.

This kyng Alla, whan he his tyme say,
With his Custance, his hooly wyf so sweete,
To Engelond been they come the righte way,
Wher as they lyve in joye and in quiete.
But litel while it lasteth, I yow heete,
Joye of this world, for tyme wol nat abyde,
Fro day to nyght it changeth as the tyde.

Who lyved evere in swich delit o day
That hym ne moeved outher conscience
Or ire, or talent, or som-kyn affray,
Envye, or pride, or passion, or offence?
I ne seye but for this ende this sentence,
That litel while in joye or in plesance
Lasteth the blisse of Alla with Custance.

For deeth, that taketh of heigh and logh his rente,
Whan passed was a yeer, evene as I gesse,
Out of this world this kyng Alla he hente,
For whom Custance hath ful greet hevynesse.
Now lat us praye God his soule blesse,
And dame Custance, finally to seye,
Toward the toun of Rome goth hir weye.

To Rome is come this hooly creature,
And fyndeth ther hir freendes hoole and sounde.
Now is she scaped al hire aventure,
And whan that she hir fader hath yfounde,
Doun on hir knees falleth she to grounde,
Wepynge for tendrenesse, in herte blithe,
She heryeth God an hundred thousand sithe.

In vertu and in hooly almus-dede
They lyven alle, and never asonder wende
Til deeth departed hem; this lyf they lede;—

1137 kynnes. 1150 *ther om.* 1156 *in om.*

And fareth now weel, my tale is at an ende.
Now Jesu Crist, that of his myght may sende
Joye after wo, governe us in his grace,
And kepe us alle that been in this place. Amen.

Heere endeth the tale of the Man of Lawe.

PROLOGUE TO THE SHIPMANNES TALE

Here endith the man of lawe his tale. And next folwith the Shipman his prolog.

Oure Ost upon his stiropes stood anoon,
And seide, "Good men, herkeneth everychoon;
This was a thrifty tale for the nonys.
Sir parisshe preste," quod he, "for Godis bonys,
Telle us a tale, as was thi forward yore;
I se wel, that ye lernede men in lore
Can meche good, bi Godis dignite."
The parson him answerde, "Benedicite,
What eyleth the man so synfully to swere?"
Oure Ost answerde, "O Jankyn, be ye there?
I smelle a Lollere in the wynde," quod he,
"Howe, goodmen," quod oure Hoste, "herkeneth me,
Abyde for Godis digne passioun,
For we shul han a predicacioun,
This Lollere here wol prechen us somwhat."
"Nay, bi Godis soule, that shal he nat,"
Seyde the Shipman, "here shal he not preche,
He shal no gospel glosen here, ne teche,
We leven alle in the grete God," quod he,
"He wolde sowen som difficulte
Or sprengen cokkel in oure clene corn.
And therfore, Ost, I warne the biforn,
My joly body shal a tale telle
And I shal clynkyn yow so mery a belle
That I shal wakyn al this companye;
But it shal not ben of Philosophie,
Ne phislyas, ne termes queynte of lawe;
Ther nis but litil Latyn in my mawe."

1174 Ost. 1190 is.

Here endith the Shipman his prolog. And next folwyng he bigynneth his tale.

THE TALE.

[Daun John, a monk of Paris, beguiles the wife of a merchant of St. Denis by money borrowed from her husband. She saves herself, on the point of discovery, by a ready answer.]

END-LINK

Bihoold the murie wordes of the Hoost to the Shipman and to the lady Prioresse.

"Wel seyd, by corpus dominus," quod our Hoost,
"Now longe moote thou saille by the cost,
Sir gentil maister, gentil maryneer.
God yeve this monk a thousand last quade yeer!
A ha! felawes, beth ware of swich a jape.
The monk putte in the mannes hood an ape,
And in his wyves eek, by Seint Austyn;
Draweth no monkes moore unto your in.
But now passe over, and lat us seke aboute,
Who shal now telle first of al this route
Another tale?" and with that word he sayde,
As curteisly as it had ben a mayde,
"My lady Prioresse, by youre leve,
So that I wiste I sholde yow nat greve,
I wolde demen that ye tellen sholde
A tale next, if so were that ye wolde.
Now wol ye vouchesauf, my lady deere?"
"Gladly," quod she, and seyde as ye shal heere.

THE PRIORESSES TALE

The prologe of the Prioresses tale.

Domine dominus noster.

O lord oure lord, thy name how merveillous
Is in this large world ysprad—quod she—
For noght oonly thy laude precious
Parfourned is by men of dignitee,
But by the mouth of children thy bountee
Parfourned is, for on the brest soukynge
Somtyme shewen they thyn heriynge.

Wherfore in laude, as I best kan or may,
Of thee, and of the whyte lylye flour
Which that the bar, and is a mayde alway,
To telle a storie I wol do my labour;
Nat that I may encreessen hir honour,
For she hirself is honour, and the roote
Of bountee, next hir sone, and soules boote.

O mooder mayde! O mayde mooder fre!
O bussh unbrent, brennynge in Moyses sighte,
That ravysedest doun fro the deitee
Thurgh thyn humblesse, the goost that in thalighte,
Of whos vertu, whan he thyn herte lighte,
Conceyved was the Fadres sapience,
Help me to telle it in thy reverence.

Lady, thy bountee, thy magnificence,
Thy vertu, and thy grete humylitee,
Ther may no tonge expresse in no science,
For somtyme, lady, er men praye to thee,
Thou goost biforn of thy benyngnytee
And getest us the lyght, thurgh thy preyere,
To gyden us unto thy sone so deere.

1651 whyte. 1669 thurgh lyght of.

My konnyng is so wayk, O blisful queene,
For to declare thy grete worthynesse,
That I ne may the weighte nat susteene,
But as a child of twelf monthe oold, or lesse,
That kan unnethes any word expresse,
Right so fare I; and therfore I yow preye,
Gydeth my song that I shal of yow seye.

Heere bigynneth the Prioresses Tale.

Ther was in Asye, in a greet citee,
Amonges cristene folk a Jewerye,
Sustened by a lord of that contree
For foule usure and lucre of vileynye,
Hateful to Crist and to his compaignye,
And thurgh this strete men myghte ride or wende,
For it was free and open at eyther ende.

A litel scole of cristen folk ther stood
Doun at the ferther ende, in which ther were
Children an heep, ycomen of cristen blood,
That lerned in that scole yeer by yere
Swich manere doctrine as men used there,
This is to seyn, to syngen and to rede,
As smale children doon in hir childhede.

Among thise children was a wydwes sone,
A litel clergeoun, seven yeer of age,
That day by day to scole was his wone,
And eek also, wher as he saugh thymage
Of Cristes mooder, he hadde in usage
As hym was taught, to knele adoun, and seye
His Ave Marie, as he goth by the weye.

1675 unnethe.

Thus hath this wydwe hir litel sone ytaught
Oure blisful lady, Cristes mooder deere,
To worshipe ay; and he forgate it naught,
For sely child wol alday soone leere.
But ay, whan I remembre on this mateere,
Seint Nicholas stant evere in my presence,
For he so yong to Crist dide reverence.

This litel child, his litel book lernynge,
As he sat in the scole at his prymer,
He "Alma redemptoris" herde synge
As children lerned hir anthiphoner;
And as he dorste, he drough hym ner and ner,
And herkned ay the wordes and the noote,
Til he the firste vers koude al by rote.

Noght wiste he what this Latyn was to seye,
For he so yong and tendre was of age,
But on a day his felawe gan he preye
Texpounden hym this song in his langage,
Or telle hym why this song was in usage;
This preyde he hym to construe and declare
Ful often tyme upon hise knowes bare.

His felawe, which that elder was than he,
Answerde hym thus, "This song, I have herd seye,
Was maked of oure blisful Lady free,
Hir to salue, and eek hir for to preye
To been our help, and socour whan we deye.
I kan namoore expounde in this mateere,
I lerne song, I kan but smal grammere."

"And is this song maked in reverence
Of Cristes mooder?" seyde this innocent.
"Now, certes, I wol do my diligence
To konne it al, er Cristemasse is went;

Though that I for my prymer shal be shent
And shal be beten thries in an houre,
I wol it konne, oure lady for to honoure."

His felawe taughte hym homward prively
Fro day to day, til he koude it by rote;
And thanne he song it wel and boldely
Fro word to word acordynge with the note.
Twies a day it passed thurgh his throte,
To scoleward, and homward whan he wente;
On Cristes mooder set was his entente.

As I have seyd, thurghout the Jewerie
This litel child, as he cam to and fro,
Ful murily than wolde he synge and crie
"O Alma redemptoris" evere-mo.
The swetnesse hath his herte perced so
Of Cristes mooder, that to hir to preye
He kan nat stynte of syngyng by the weye.

Oure firste foo, the serpent Sathanas,
That hath in Jewes herte his waspes nest,
Up swal, and seyde, "O Hebrayk peple, allas,
Is this to yow a thyng that is honest,
That swich a boy shal walken as hym lest
In youre despit, and synge of swich sentence,
Which is agayn oure lawes reverence?"

Fro thennes forth the Jewes han conspired
This innocent out of this world to chace.
An homycide therto han they hyred
That in an aleye hadde a privee place;
And as the child gan forby for to pace,
This cursed Jew hym hente and heeld hym faste,
And kitte his throte, and in a pit hym caste.

1741 Jueriee. 1743 *than om.* 1745 *hath om.* 1749, 1755, Jues.

I seye that in a wardrobe they hym threwe,
Where as thise Jewes purgen hire entraille.
O cursed folk of Herodes al newe,
What may youre yvel entente yow availle?
Mordre wol out, certeyn, it wol nat faille,
And namely ther thonour of God shal sprede,
The blood out crieth on youre cursed dede.

O martir, sowded to virginitee,
Now maystow syngen, folwynge evere in oon
The white lamb celestial—quod she—
Of which the grete Evaungelist Seint John
In Pathmos wroot, which seith that they that goon
Biforn this lamb and synge a song al newe,
That never, fleshly, wommen they ne knewe.

This povre wydwe awaiteth al that nyght
After hir litel child, but he cam noght;
For which, as soone as it was dayes lyght,
With face pale of drede and bisy thoght,
She hath at scole and elles-where hym soght,
Til finally she gan so fer espie,
That he last seyn was in the Jewerie.

With moodres pitee in hir brest enclosed,
She gooth, as she were half out of hir mynde,
To every place where she hath supposed
By liklihede hir litel child to finde,
And evere on Cristes mooder, meeke and kynde,
She cride, and atte laste thus she wroghte,
Among the cursed Jewes she hym soghte.

She frayneth, and she preyeth pitously
To every Jew that dwelte in thilke place,
To telle hir if hir child wente oght forby.
They seyde nay; but Jesu, of his grace,

1782 Juerie. 1789 Jues.

Yaf in hir thoght, inwith a litel space,
That in that place after hir sone she cryde,
Wher he was casten in a pit bisyde.

O grete God, that parfournest thy laude
By mouth of innocentz, lo, heer thy myght!
This gemme of chastite, this emeraude,
And eek of martirdom the ruby bright,
Ther he with throte ykorven lay upright,
He "Alma redemptoris" gan to synge
So loude, that al the place gan to rynge.

The cristene folk that thurgh the strete wente
In coomen, for to wondre upon this thyng,
And hastily they for the Provost sente.
He cam anon withouten tariyng,
And herieth Crist that is of hevene kyng,
And eek his mooder, honour of mankynde;
And after that, the Jewes leet he bynde.

This child, with pitous lamentacioun,
Uptaken was, syngynge his song alway,
And with honour of greet processioun
They carien hym unto the nexte abbay;
His mooder swownynge by his beere lay,
Unnethe myghte the peple that was theere
This newe Rachel brynge fro his beere.

With torment and with shameful deeth echon
This Provost dooth the Jewes for to sterve,
That of this mordre wiste, and that anon.
He nolde no swich cursednesse observe;
Yvele shal have that yvele wol deserve.
Therfore with wilde hors he dide hem drawe,
And after that he heng hem, by the lawe.

1822 he have.

Upon his beere ay lith this innocent
Biforn the chief auter, whil masse laste,
And after that, the abbot with his covent
Han sped hem for to burien hym ful faste,
And whan they hooly water on hym caste,
Yet spak this child, whan spreynd was hooly water,
And song "O Alma redemptoris mater."

This abbot, which that was an hooly man,
As monkes been—or elles oghte be—
This yonge child to conjure he bigan,
And seyde, "O deere child, I halse thee,
In vertu of the hooly Trinitee;
Tel me, what is thy cause for to synge
Sith that thy throte is kut, to my semynge."

"My throte is kut unto my nekke-boon,"
Seyde this child, "and, as by wey of kynde,
I sholde have dyed, ye, longe tyme agon,
But Jesu Crist, as ye in bookes fynde,
Wil that his glorie laste and be in mynde,
And for the worship of his mooder deere,
Yet may I synge "O Alma" loude and cleere.

This welle of mercy, Cristes mooder swete,
I loved alwey as after my konnynge;
And whan that I my lyf sholde forlete,
To me she cam, and bad me for to synge
This antheme, verraily, in my deyynge,
As ye han herd, and whan that I hadde songe,
Me thoughte she leyde a greyn upon my tonge.

Wherfore I synge, and synge I moot certeyn
In honour of that blisful mayden free,
Til fro my tonge oftaken is the greyn.

1825 *his* this. 1826 the masse. 1835 halsen. 1850 anthephon.

And afterward thus seyde she to me,
'My litel child, now wol I fecche thee,
Whan that the greyn is fro thy tonge ytake;
Be nat agast, I wol thee nat forsake.' "

This hooly monk, this Abbot, hym meene I,
His tonge out-caughte, and took awey the greyn,
And he yaf up the goost ful softely;
And whan this Abbot hadde this wonder seyn,
Hise salte teeris trikled doun as reyn,
And gruf he fil al plat upon the grounde,
And stille he lay, as he had been ybounde.

The covent eek lay on the pavement,
Wepynge, and heryen Cristes mooder deere.
And after that they ryse, and forth been went,
And tooken awey this martir from his beere,
And in a temple of marbul stones cleere
Enclosen they his litel body sweete.
Ther he is now, God leve us for to meete!

O yonge Hugh of Lyncoln, slayn also
With cursed Jewes, as it is notable,
For it nis but a litel while ago,
Preye eek for us, we synful folk unstable,
That of his mercy God so merciable
On us his grete mercy multiplie,
For reverence of his mooder Marie. Amen.

1866 *been* leyn. 1873 alle for. 1876 is.

Heere is ended the Prioresses Tale.

PROLOGUE TO CHAUCER'S TALE OF SIR THOPAS

Bihoold the murye wordes of the Hoost to Chaucer.

Whan seyd was al this miracle, every man
As sobre was, that wonder was to se,
Til that oure Hooste japen tho bigan,
And thanne at erst he looked upon me,
And seyde thus, "What man artow," quod he,
"Thou lookest as thou woldest fynde an hare,
For ever upon the ground I se thee stare.

Approche neer, and looke up murily;
Now war yow, sires, and lat this man have place.
He in the waast is shape as wel as I;
This were a popet in an arm tenbrace
For any womman smal, and fair of face.
He semeth elvyssh by his contenaunce,
For unto no wight dooth he daliaunce.

Sey now somwhat, syn oother folk han sayd,
Telle us a tale of myrthe, and that anon."
"Hooste," quod I, "ne beth nat yvele apayed,
For oother tale certes kan I noon
But of a ryme I lerned longe agoon."
"Ye, that is good," quod he, "now shul we heere
Som deyntee thyng, me thynketh by his cheere."

1883, 1897, Hoost; *tho* to. 1899 rym. 1900 *we* ye.

SIR THOPAS

Heere bigynneth Chaucers tale of Thopas.

Listeth, lordes, in good entent,
And I wol telle verrayment
  Of myrthe and of solas,
Al of a knyght was fair and gent
In bataille and in tourneyment,
  His name was Sir Thopas.

Yborn he was in fer contree,
In Flaundres, al biyonde the see,
  At Poperyng in the place;
His fader was a man ful free,
And lord he was of that contree,
  As it was Goddes grace.

Sir Thopas wax a doghty swayn,
Whit was his face as payndemayn,
  Hise lippes rede as rose;
His rode is lyk scarlet in grayn,
And I yow telle, in good certayn,
  He hadde a semely nose.

His heer, his berd, was lyk saffroun,
That to his girdel raughte adoun;
  Hise shoon of Cordewane.
Of Brugges were his hosen broun,
His robe was of syklatoun
  That coste many a jane.

He koude hunte at wilde deer,
And ride an haukyng for river,
  With grey goshauk on honde,

1922 shoos.

Therto he was a good archeer,
Of wrastlyng was ther noon his peer,
  Ther any ram shal stonde.

Ful many a mayde, bright in bour,
They moorne for hym, paramour,
  Whan hem were bet to slepe;
But he was chaast and no lechour,
And sweete as is the brembulflour
  That bereth the rede hepe.

And so bifel upon a day,
Forsothe as I yow telle may,
  Sir Thopas wolde out ride;
He worth upon his steede gray,
And in his hand a launcegay,
  A long swerd by his side.

He priketh thurgh a fair forest,
Therinne is many a wilde best,
  Ye, bothe bukke and hare,
And as he priketh north and est,
I telle it yow, hym hadde almest
  Bitidde a sory care.

Ther spryngen herbes, grete and smale,
The lycorys and cetewale,
  And many a clowe-gylofre,
And notemuge to putte in ale,
Wheither it be moyste or stale,
  Or for to leye in cofre.

The briddes synge, it is no nay,
The sparhauk and the papejay
  That joye it was to heere,
The thrustelcok made eek hir lay,
The wodedowve upon a spray
  She sang ful loude and cleere.

Sir Thopas fil in love-longynge,
Al whan he herde the thrustel synge,
And pryked as he were wood;
His faire steede in his prikynge
So swatte that men myghte him wrynge,
His sydes were al blood.

Sir Thopas eek so wery was
For prikyng on the softe gras,
So fiers was his corage,
That doun he leyde him in that plas
To make his steede som solas,
And yaf hym good forage.

"O seinte Marie, benedicite,
What eyleth this love at me
To bynde me so soore?
Me dremed al this nyght, pardee,
An elf-queene shal my lemman be,
And slepe under my goore.

An elf-queene wol I love, ywis,
For in this world no womman is
Worthy to be my make
In towne;
Alle othere wommen I forsake,
And to an elf-queene I me take
By dale and eek by downe."

Into his sadel he clamb anon,
And priketh over stile and stoon
An elf-queene for tespye,
Til he so longe hadde riden and goon
That he foond, in a pryve woon,
The contree of Fairye
So wilde;

For in that contree was ther noon
That to him dorste ryde or goon,
  Neither wyf ne childe,

Til that ther cam a greet geaunt,
His name was Sir Olifaunt,
  A perilous man of dede;
He seyde "Child, by Termagaunt,
But if thou prike out of myn haunt,
  Anon I sle thy steede
    With mace.
Heere is the queene of Fayërye,
With harpe and pipe and symphonye,
  Dwellyng in this place."

The child seyde, "Also moote I thee,
Tomorwe wol I meete with thee,
  Whan I have myn armoure.
And yet I hope, par ma fay,
That thou shalt with this launcegay
  Abyen it ful sowre.
    Thy mawe
Shal I percen if I may
Er it be fully pryme of day,
  For heere thow shalt be slawe."

Sir Thopas drow abak ful faste,
This geant at hym stones caste
  Out of a fel staf-slynge;
But faire escapeth Child Thopas,
And al it was thurgh Goddes gras,
  And thurgh his fair berynge.

Yet listeth, lordes, to my tale,
Murier than the nightyngale,
  For now I wol yow rowne

1995 *line om.* 2004 Fairye. 2020 *Child* Sir. 2025 *For now om.*

How Sir Thopas, with sydes smale,
Prikyng over hill and dale
Is comen agayn to towne.

His murie men comanded he
To make hym bothe game and glee,
For nedes moste he fighte
With a geaunt with hevedes three,
For paramour and jolitee
Of oon that shoon ful brighte.

"Do come," he seyde, "my mynstrales,
And geestours, for to tellen tales
Anon in myn armynge;
Of romances that been roiales,
Of Popes and of Cardinales,
And eek of love-likynge."

They fette hym first the sweete wyn,
And mede eek in a mazelyn,
And roial spicerye,
And gyngebreed that was ful fyn,
And lycorys, and eek comyn,
With sugre that is so trye.

He dide next his white leere
Of clooth of lake, fyn and cleere,
A breech, and eek a sherte,
And next his sherte an aketoun,
And over that an haubergeoun,
For percynge of his herte.

And over that a fyn hawberk,
Was al ywroght of Jewes werk,
Ful strong it was of plate.
And over that his cote-armour
As whit as is a lilye flour,
In which he wol debate.

His sheeld was al of gold so reed,
And therinne was a bores heed,
  A charbocle bisyde;
And there he swoor on ale and breed,
How that "the geaunt shal be deed
  Bityde what bityde!"

Hise jambeux were of quyrboilly,
His swerdes shethe of yvory,
  His helm of laton bright,
His sadel was of rewel-boon,
His brydel as the sonne shoon,
  Or as the moone light.

His spere it was of fyn ciprees,
That bodeth werre, and no thyng pees,
  The heed ful sharpe ygrounde;
His steede was al dappull-gray,
It gooth an ambil in the way
  Ful softely and rounde
    In londe.
Loo, lordes myne, heere is a fit;
If ye wol any moore of it,
  To telle it wol I fonde.

The Second Fit.

Now holde youre mouth, par charitee,
Bothe knyght and lady free,
  And herkneth to my spelle;
Of batailles and of chivalry
And of ladyes love-drury
  Anon I wol yow telle.

Men speken of romances of prys,
Of Hornchild, and of Ypotys,

Of Beves and Sir Gy,
Of Sir Lybeux and Pleyndamour,
But Sir Thopas, he bereth the flour
Of roial chivalry.

His goode steede al he bistrood,
And forth upon his wey he glood
As sparcle out of the bronde.
Upon his creest he bar a tour,
And therinne stiked a lilie-flour;
God shilde his cors fro shonde!

And for he was a knyght auntrous,
He nolde slepen in noon hous,
But liggen in his hoode.
His brighte helm was his wonger,
And by hym baiteth his dextrer
Of herbes fyne and goode.

Hym-self drank water of the well,
As dide the knyght sir Percyvell
So worly under wede,
Til on a day————

Heere the Hoost stynteth Chaucer of his Tale of Thopas.

"Na moore of this, for Goddes dignitee,"
Quod oure hooste, "for thou makest me
So wery of thy verray lewednesse,
That also wisly God my soule blesse,
Min eres aken of thy drasty speche.
Now swich a rym the devel I biteche!
This may wel be rym dogerel," quod he.

2094 rood. 2110 hoost.

"Why so?" quod I, "why wiltow lette me
Moore of my tale than another man
Syn that it is the beste tale I kan?"
"By God," quod he, "for pleynly at a word
Thy drasty rymyng is nat worth a toord,
Thou doost noght elles but despendest tyme.
Sir, at o word thou shalt no lenger ryme.
Lat se wher thou kanst tellen aught in geeste,
Or telle in prose somwhat, at the leeste,
In which ther be som murthe or som doctryne."
"Gladly," quod I, "by Goddes sweete pyne,
I wol yow telle a litel thyng in prose,
That oghte liken yow as I suppose,
Or elles, certes, ye been to daungerous.
It is a moral tale vertuous,
Al be it take somtyme in sondry wyse
Of sondry folk as I shal yow devyse.
As thus; ye woot that every Evaungelist
That telleth us the peyne of Jesu Crist
Ne seith nat alle thyng as his felawe dooth,
But, nathelees, hir sentence is al sooth,
And alle acorden as in hir sentence,
Al be ther in hir tellyng difference.
For somme of hem seyn moore, and somme seyn lesse,
Whan they his pitous passioun expresse;
I meene of Marke, Mathew, Luc, and John,
But doutelees hir sentence is al oon,
Therfore, lordynges alle, I yow biseche
If that yow thynke I varie as in my speche,
As thus, though that I telle somwhat moore
Of proverbes, than ye han herd bifoore,
Comprehended in this litel tretys heere,
To enforce with theffect of my mateere,
And though I nat the same wordes seye
As ye han herd, yet to yow alle I preye,

2141 Mark.

Blameth me nat; for, as in my sentence
Ye shul nat fynden moche difference
Fro the sentence of this tretys lyte
After the which this murye tale I write.
And therfore herkneth what that I shal seye,
And lat me tellen al my tale, I preye."

THE TALE (in prose).

[A young man called Melibeus, whose wife Prudence and daughter Sophie (Wisdom) are maltreated by his foes in his absence, is counseled with many wise sayings uttered by his wife tending toward peace and forgiveness, instead of revenge.]

2152 *moche om.*

PROLOGUE TO THE MONKES TALE

The murye wordes of the Hoost to the Monk.

Whan ended was my tale of Melibee,
And of Prudence, and hir benignytee,
Oure hooste seyde, "As I am feithful man,
And by that precious corpus Madrian,
I hadde levere than a barel ale
That goode lief my wyf hadde herd this tale!
She nys nothyng of swich pacience
As was this Melibeus wyf, Prudence.
By Goddes bones, whan I bete my knaves
She bryngeth me forth the grete clobbed staves,
And crieth, 'Slee the dogges, everichoon,
And brek hem, bothe bak and every boon.'
And if that any neighebore of myne
Wol nat in chirche to my wyf enclyne,
Or be so hardy to hir to trespace,
Whan she comth hoom she rampeth in my face,
And crieth, 'false coward, wrek thy wyf!
By corpus bones, I wol have thy knyf,
And thou shalt have my distaf and go spynne
Fro day to nyght!' Right thus she wol bigynne.
'Allas,' she seith, 'that evere I was shape
To wedden a milksop or a coward ape,
That wol been overlad with every wight;
Thou darst nat stonden by thy wyves right!'
This is my lif, but if that I wol fighte,
And out at dore anon I moot me dighte,
Or elles I am but lost, but if that I

3081 hoost. 3084 good. 3094 *hoom om.*

Be lik a wilde leoun fool-hardy.
I woot wel she wol do me slee som day
Som neighebore, and thanne go my way.
For I am perilous with knyf in honde,
Al be it that I dar hir nat withstonde.
For she is byg in armes, by my feith,
That shal he fynde that hir mysdooth or seith—
But lat us passe awey fro this mateere.
My lord the Monk," quod he, "be myrie of cheere,
For ye shul telle a tale, trewely.
Loo, Rouchestre stant heer faste by.
Ryde forth, myn owene lord, brek nat oure game.
But, by my trouthe, I knowe nat youre name;
Wher shal I calle yow my lord daun John,
Or daun Thomas, or elles daun Albon?
Of what hous be ye, by youre fader kyn?
I vowe to God, thou hast a ful fair skyn,
It is a gentil pasture ther thow goost.
Thou art nat lyk a penant or a goost.
Upon my feith, thou art som officer,
Som worthy sexteyn, or som celerer,
For by my fader soule, as to my doom,
Thou art a maister whan thou art at hoom,
No povre cloysterer, ne no novys,
But a governour, wily and wys;
And therwith-al of brawnes and of bones
A wel-farynge persone, for the nones.
I pray to God, yeve hym confusioun
That first thee broghte unto religioun.
Thou woldest han been a tredefowel aright;
Haddestow as greet a leeve as thou hast myght
To parfourne al thy lust in engendrure,
Thou haddest bigeten ful many a creature.
Allas, why werestow so wyd a cope?
God yeve me sorwe, but, and I were a pope,

3129 cloystrer.

Nat oonly thou but every myghty man
Though he were shorn ful hye upon his pan,
Sholde have a wyf, for al the world is lorn.
Religioun hath take up al the corn
Of tredyng, and we borel men been shrympes.
Of fieble trees ther comen wrecched ympes.
This maketh that our heyres ben so sclendre
And feble, that they may nat wel engendre;
This maketh that oure wyves wole assaye
Religious folk, for ye mowe bettre paye
Of Venus paiementz than mowe we;
God woot no lussheburghes payen ye.
But be nat wrooth, my lord, for that I pleye,
Ful ofte in game a sooth I have herd seye."
This worthy Monk took al in pacience,
And seyde, "I wol doon al my diligence,
As fer as sowneth into honestee,
To telle yow a tale, or two, or three.
And if yow list to herkne hyderward
I wol yow seyn the lyf of seint Edward;
Or ellis first tragedies wol I telle
Of whiche I have an hundred in my celle.
Tragedie is to seyn, a certeyn storie,
As olde bookes maken us memorie,
Of hym that stood in greet prosperitee
And is yfallen out of heigh degree
Into myserie, and endeth wrecchedly,
And they ben versified communely
Of six feet, which men clepen exametron.
In prose eek been endited many oon,
And eek in meetre, in many a sondry wyse.
Lo, this declaryng oghte ynogh suffise;
Now herkneth, if yow liketh for to heere.
But first, I yow biseeke in this mateere,
Though I by ordre telle nat thise thynges,

1346-7 *om. in MS.* 3152 lussheburgh. 3160 *yow om.*

Be it of popes, emperours, or kynges,
After hir ages, as men writen fynde,
But tellen hem, som bifore and som bihynde,
As it now comth unto my remembraunce;
Have me excused of myn ignoraunce. 3180

THE MONKES TALE

Heere bigynneth the Monkes Tale de Casibus Virorum Illustrium.

I wol biwaille in manere of Tragedie
The harm of hem that stoode in heigh degree,
And fillen so, that ther nas no remedie
To brynge hem out of hir adversitee.
For certein, whan that Fortune list to flee,
Ther may no man the cours of hire withholde;
Lat no man truste on blynd prosperitee;
Be war of thise ensamples, trewe and olde.

Lucifer

At Lucifer, though he an aungel were,
And nat a man, at hym wol I biginne,
For though Fortune may noon aungel dere,
From heigh degree yet fel he for his synne
Doun into helle, where he yet is inne.
O Lucifer, brightest of aungels alle,
Now artow Sathanes, that mayst nat twynne
Out of miserie, in which that thou art falle.

Adam

Loo Adam, in the feeld of Damyssene,
With Goddes owene fynger wroght was he,
And nat bigeten of mannes sperme unclene,
And welte all Paradys, savynge o tree.
Hadde nevere worldly man so heigh degree
As Adam, til he, for mysgovernaunce,
Was dryven out of hys hye prosperitee
To labour, and to helle, and to meschaunce.

Sampson

Loo Sampson, which that was annunciat
By angel, longe er his nativitee,
And was to God almyghty consecrat,
And stood in noblesse whil he myghte see,
Was nevere swich another as was hee,
To speke of strengthe and therwith hardynesse;
But to hise wyves toolde he his secree,
Thurgh which he slow hymself for wrecchednesse.

Sampsoun, this noble almyghty champioun,
Withouten wepene, save his handes tweye,
He slow and al torente the leoun
Toward his weddyng walkynge by the weye.
His false wyf koude hym so plese and preye
Til she his conseil knew, and she untrewe
Unto hise foos his conseil gan biwreye,
And hym forsook, and took another newe.

Thre hundred foxes took Sampson for ire,
And alle hir tayles he togydre bond,
And sette the foxes tayles alle on fire;
For he on every tayl had knyt a brond,
And they brende alle the cornes in that lond,
And alle hir olyveres and vynes eke.
A thousand men he slow eek with his hond,
And hadde no wepene but an asses cheke.

Whan they were slayn, so thursted hym, that he
Was wel ny lorn, for which he gan to preye
That God wolde on his peyne han som pitee,
And sende hym drynke, or elles moste he deye;
And of this asses cheke, that was dreye,
Out of a wang-tooth sprang anon a welle
Of which he drank anon, shortly to seye,
Thus heelp hym God, as Judicum can telle.

3214 tweyne.

By verray force at Gazan, on a nyght,
Maugree Philistiens of that citee,
The gates of the toun he hath upplyght,
And on his bak ycaryed hem hath he
Hye on an hille, that men myghte hem see.
O noble almyghty Sampson, lief and deere,
Had thou nat toold to wommen thy secree,
In all this world ne hadde been thy peere.

This Sampson nevere ciser drank, ne wyn,
Ne on his heed cam rasour noon, ne sheere,
By precept of the messager divyn,
For alle hise strengthes in hise heeres weere.
And fully twenty wynter, yeer by yeere,
He hadde of Israel the governaunce.
But soone shal he wepen many a teere,
For wommen shal hym bryngen to meschaunce!

Unto his lemman Dalida he tolde
That in hise heeres al his strengthe lay,
And falsly to hise fooman she hym solde;
And slepynge in hir barme upon a day
She made to clippe or shere hise heres away,
And made hise foomen al this craft espyen.
And whan that they hym foond in this array,
They bounde hym faste, and putten out hise eyen.

But er his heer were clipped or yshave,
Ther was no boond with which men myghte him bynde,
But now is he in prison in a cave,
Where as they made hym at the queerne grynde.
O noble Sampson, strongest of mankynde,
O whilom juge in glorie and in richesse,
Now maystow wepen with thyne eyen blynde,
Sith thou fro wele art falle in wrecchednesse!

3241 hill. 3251 wepe.

The ende of this caytyf was as I shal seye;
Hise foomen made a feeste upon a day,
And made hym as hir fool biforn hem pleye.
And this was in a temple of greet array;
But atte laste he made a foul affray,
For he two pilers shook, and made hem falle,
And doun fil temple and al, and ther it lay,
And slow hymself, and eek his foomen alle.

This is to seyn, the prynces everichoon,
And eek thre thousand bodyes were ther slayn
With fallynge of the grete temple of stoon.
Of Sampson now wol I namoore sayn:
Beth war by this ensample oold and playn
That no men telle hir conseil til hir wyves
Of swich thyng as they wolde han secree fayn,
If that it touche hir lymmes or hir lyves.

Hercules

Off Hercules the sovereyn conquerour
Syngen hise werkes laude and heigh renoun,
For in his tyme of strengthe he was the flour.
He slow and rafte the skyn of the leoun,
He of Centauros leyde the boost adoun,
He arpies slow, the crueel bryddes felle,
He golden apples refte of the dragoun,
He drow out Cerberus the hound of helle.

He slow the crueel tyrant Busirus,
And made his hors to frete hym, flessh and boon;
He slow the firy serpent venymus,
Of Acheloys two hornes, he brak oon,
And he slow Cacus in a Cave of stoon;
He slow the geaunt Antheus the stronge,
He slow the grisly boor, and that anon,
And bar the hevene on his nekke longe.

3271 *hir* a. 3274 *two* the. 3296 hornes two.

Was nevere wight, sith that this world bigan,
That slow so manye monstres as dide he.
Thurghout this wyde world his name ran,
What for his strengthe, and for his heigh bountee,
And every reawme wente he for to see.
He was so stroong that no man myghte hym lette;
At bothe the worldes endes, seith Trophee,
In stide of boundes, he a pileer sette.

A lemman hadde this noble champioun,
That highte Dianira, fressh as May,
And as thise clerkes maken mencioun,
She hath hym sent a sherte fressh and gay.
Allas, this sherte, allas, and weylaway!
Envenymed was so subtilly withalle,
That er that he had wered it half a day
It made his flessh al from hise bones falle.

But nathelees somme clerkes hir excusen
By oon that highte Nessus, that it maked.
Be as be may, I wol hir noght accusen;
But on his bak this sherte he wered al naked,
Til that his flessh was for the venym blaked;
And whan he saugh noon oother remedye,
In hoote coles he hath hym-selven raked,
For with no venym deigned hym to dye.

Thus starf this worthy myghty Hercules.
Lo, who may truste on Fortune any throwe?
For hym that folweth al this world of prees,
Er he be war, is ofte yleyd ful lowe.
Ful wys is he that kan hymselven knowe.
Beth war, for whan that Fortune list to glose,
Thanne wayteth she her man to overthrowe,
By swich a wey, as he wolde leest suppose.

3314 Evenymed.

Nabugodonosor

The myghty trone, the precious tresor
The glorious ceptre and roial magestee
That hadde the kyng Nabugodonosor,
With tonge unnethe may discryved bee.
He twyes wan Jerusalem the citee;
The vessel of the temple he with hym ladde.
At Babiloigne was his sovereyn see,
In which his glorie and his delit he hadde.

The faireste children of the blood roial
Of Israel he leet do gelde anoon,
And maked ech of hem to been his thral.
Amonges othere, Daniel was oon,
That was the wiseste child of everychon;
For he the dremes of the kyng expouned
Wheras in Chaldeye clerk ne was ther noon
That wiste to what fyn hise dremes sowned.

This proude kyng leet maken a statue of gold
Sixty cubites long, and sevene in brede,
To which ymage bothe yonge and oold
Comaunded he to loute and have in drede,
Or in a fourneys ful of flambes rede
He shal be brent, that wolde noght obeye.
But nevere wolde assente to that dede
Daniel, ne hise yonge felawes tweye.

This kyng of kynges proud was and elaat;
He wende, that God that sit in magestee
Ne myghte hym nat bireve of his estaat;
But sodeynly he loste his dignytee,
And lyk a beest hym semed for to bee,
And eet hey as an oxe and lay theroute;
In reyn with wilde beestes walked hee
Til certein tyme was ycome aboute.

3351 *To* The; he bothe. 3352 *he om.*

And lik an egles fetheres wex his heres,
Hise nayles lyk a briddes clawes weere,
Til God relessed hym a certeyn yeres,
And yaf hym wit, and thanne, with many a teere,
He thanked God; and evere his lyf in feere
Was he to doon amys, or moore trespace,
And til that tyme he leyd was on his beere,
He knew that God was ful of myght and grace.

Balthasar

His sone which that highte Balthasar,
That heeld the regne after his fader day,
He by his fader koude noght be war,
For proud he was of herte and of array;
And eek an ydolastre he was ay.
His hye estaat assured hym in pryde;
But Fortune caste hym doun and ther he lay,
And sodeynly his regne gan divide.

A feeste he made unto hise lordes alle
Upon a tyme, and bad hem blithe bee,
And thanne hise officeres gan he calle,
"Gooth, bryngeth forth the vesseles," quod he,
"Whiche that my fader, in his prosperitee,
Out of the temple of Jerusalem birafte,
And to oure hye goddes thanke we
Of honour, that oure eldres with us lafte."

Hys wyf, hise lordes, and hise concubynes
Ay dronken, whil hire appetites laste,
Out of thise noble vessels sondry wynes.
And on a wal this kyng hise eyen caste,
And saugh an hand armlees that wroot ful faste,
For feere of which he quook and siked soore.
This hand, that Balthasar so soore agaste,
Wroot 'Mane, techel, phares,' and na moore.

3383 officers. 3384 vessels.

In al that land magicien was noon
That koude expounde what this lettre mente.
But Daniel expowned it anon,
And seyde, "Kyng, God to thy fader lente
Glorie and honour, regne, tresour, rente;
And he was proud, and nothyng God ne dradde,
And therfore God greet wreche upon hym sente,
And hym birafte the regne that he hadde.

He was out-cast of mannes compaignye,
With asses was his habitacioun,
And eet hey as a beest in weet and drye,
Til that he knew by grace and by resoun
That God of hevene hath domynacioun
Over every regne and every creature,
And thanne hadde God of hym compassioun
And hym restored his regne and his figure.

Eek thou that art his sone art proud also,
And knowest alle thise thynges verraily,
And art rebel to God and art his foo.
Thou drank eek of hise vessels boldely,
Thy wyf eek, and thy wenches synfully
Dronke of the same vessels sondry wynys,
And heryest false goddes cursedly;
Therfore to thee yshapen ful greet pyne ys.

This hand was sent from God, that on the wal
Wroot 'Mane techel phares,' truste me!
Thy regne is doon, thou weyest noght at al,
Dyvyded is thy regne, and it shal be
To Medes and to Perses yeve," quod he.
And thilke same nyght this kyng was slawe
And Darius occupyeth his degree,
Thogh he therto hadde neither right ne lawe.

3400 *lente* sente. 3425 *yeve om.*

Lordynges, ensample heer-by may ye take
How that in lordshipe is no sikernesse;
For whan Fortune wole a man forsake,
She bereth awey his regne and his richesse,
And eek hise freendes, bothe moore and lesse,
For what man that hath freendes thurgh Fortune
Mishap wol maken hem enemys, as I gesse;
This proverbe is ful sooth and ful commune.

Cenobia

Cenobia, of Palymerie queene,
As writen Persiens of hir noblesse,
So worthy was in armes, and so keene,
That no wight passed hir in hardynesse,
Ne in lynage, ne in oother gentillesse.
Of kynges blood of Perce is she descended.
I seye nat that she hadde moost fairnesse,
But of hire shap she myghte nat been amended.

From hir childhede I fynde that she fledde
Office of wommen, and to wode she wente,
And many a wilde hertes blood she shedde
With arwes brode, that she to hem sente.
She was so swift that she anon hem hente,
And whan that she was elder, she wolde kille
Leouns, leopardes, and beres al to-rente,
And in hir armes weelde hem at hir wille.

She dorste wilde beestes dennes seke,
And rennen in the montaignes al the nyght
And slepen under the bussh, and she koude eke
Wrastlen by verray force and verray myght
With any yong man, were he never so wight;
Ther myghte nothyng in hir armes stonde.
She kepte hir maydenhod from every wight,
To no man deigned hir for to be bonde.

3441 nor in.

But atte laste hir freendes han hir maried
To Odenake, a prynce of that contree,
Al were it so that she hem longe taried,
And ye shul understonde how that he
Hadde swiche fantasies as hadde she.
But nathelees, whan they were knyt infeere,
They lyved in joye and in felicitee,
For ech of hem hadde oother lief and deere;

Save o thyng, that she wolde nevere assente
By no wey that he sholde by hir lye
But ones, for it was hir pleyn entente
To have a child the world to multiplye;
And also soone as that she myghte espye
That she was nat with childe with that dede,
Thanne wolde she suffre hym doon his fantasye
Eft-soone and nat but oones, out of drede.

And if she were with childe at thilke cast,
Namoore sholde he pleyen thilke game
Til fully fourty dayes weren past;
Thanne wolde she ones suffre hym do the same.
Al were this Odenake wilde or tame,
He gat na moore of hir, for thus she seyde,
It was to wyves lecheie and shame
In oother caas, if that men with hem pleyde.

Two sones by this Odenake hadde she,
The whiche she kepte in vertu and lettrure,
But now unto oure tale turne we;
I seye, so worshipful a creature,
And wys ther-with, and large with mesure,
So penyble in the werre, and curteis eke,
Ne moore labour myghte in werre endure,
Was noon, though al this world men wolde seke.

3462, 3481, 3485, Onedake.

Hir riche array ne myghte nat be told
As wel in vessel as in hir clothyng;
She was al clad in perree and in gold,
And eek she lafte noght for noon huntyng
To have of sondry tonges ful knowyng,
Whan that she leyser hadde, and for to entende
To lerne bookes was al hire likyng,
How she in vertu myghte hir lyf dispende.

And shortly of this proces for to trete,
So doghty was hir housbonde and eek she,
That they conquered manye regnes grete
In the orient, with many a faire citee,
Apertenaunt unto the magestee
Of Rome, and with strong hond held hem ful faste,
Ne nevere myghte hir foomen doon hem flee,
Ay whil that Odenakes dayes laste.

Hir batailles, who-so list hem for to rede,
Agayn Sapor the kyng and othere mo,
And how that al this proces fil in dede,
Why she conquered, and what title had therto,
And after of hir meschief and hire wo,
How that she was biseged and ytake,
Lat hym unto my maister Petrak go,
That writ ynough of this, I undertake.

Whan Odenake was deed, she myghtily
The regnes heeld; and with hir propre hond
Agayn hir foos she faught so cruelly
That ther nas kyng ne prynce in al that lond
That he nas glad, if he that grace fond
That she ne wolde upon his lond werreye.
With hir they makede alliance by bond
To been in pees, and let hire ride and pleye.

3511 *that om.* 3512 *had om.* 3517 Onedake. 3523 made.

The Emperour of Rome, Claudius,
Ne hym bifore, the Romayn Galien,
Ne dorste nevere been so corageus,
Ne noon Ermyn, ne noon Egipcien,
Ne Surrien, ne noon Arabyen,
With-inne the feeldes that dorste with hir fighte,
Lest that she wolde hem with hir handes slen,
Or with hir meignee putten hem to flighte.

In kynges habit wente hir sones two
As heires of hir fadres regnes alle,
And Hermanno, and Thymalao
Hir names were, as Persiens hem calle.
But ay Fortune hath in hir hony galle;
This myghty queene may no while endure.
Fortune out of hir regne made hir falle
To wrecchednesse and to mysaventure.

Aurelian, whan that the governaunce
Of Rome cam into hise handes tweye,
He shoope upon this queene to doon vengeaunce,
And with hise legions he took his weye
Toward Cenobie, and shortly for to seye,
He made hir flee and atte last hir hente,
And fettred hir, and eek hir children tweye,
And wan the land, and hoom to Rome he wente.

Amonges othere thynges that he wan,
Hir chaar, that was with gold wroght and perree,
This grete Romayn, this Aurelian,
Hath with hym lad for that men sholde it see.
Biforen his triumphe walketh shee,
With gilte cheynes on hir nekke hangynge;
Coroned was she, after hir degree,
And ful of perree charged hir clothynge.

3553 Biforn.

Allas, Fortune! she that whilom was
Dredful to kynges and to emperoures,
Now gaureth al the peple on hir, allas!
And she that helmed was in starke shoures
And wan by force townes stronge and toures
Shal on hir heed now were a vitremyte,
And she that bar the ceptre ful of floures
Shal bere a distaf, hir costes for to quyte.

[The 'modern instances' which follow here, are at the end of the Tale in this MS.]

De Petro Rege Ispannie

O noble, O worthy Petro, glorie of Spayne!
Whom Fortune heeld so hye in magestee,
Wel oghten men thy pitous deeth complayne;
Out of thy land thy brother made thee flee,
And after at a seege by subtiltee
Thou were bitraysed, and lad unto his tente
Where as he with his owene hand slow thee,
Succedynge in thy regne and in thy rente.

The feeld of snow, with thegle of blak therinne
Caught with the lymerod, coloured as the gleede,
He brew this cursednesse and al this synne.
The wikked nest was werker of this nede,
Noght Charles Olyvver, that took ay heede
Of trouthe and honour, but of Armorike
Genyloun Olyver, corrupt for meede,
Broghte this worthy kyng in swich a brike.

De Petro Rege de Cipro

O worthy Petro, kyng of Cipre, also,
That Alisandre wan by heigh maistrie,
Ful many an hethen wroghtestow ful wo,
Of which thyne owene liges hadde envye,
And for nothyng but for thy chivalrie,
They in thy bed han slayn thee by the morwe.

Thus kan Fortune hir wheel governe and gye,
And out of joye brynge men to sorwe.

De Barnabo de Lumbardia

Off Melan grete Barnabo Viscounte,
God of delit and scourge of Lumbardye,
Why sholde I nat thyn infortune acounte,
Sith in estaat thow cloumbe were so hye?
Thy brother sone, that was thy double allye
For he thy nevew was, and sone-in-lawe,
Withinne his prisoun made thee to dye,
But why, ne how, noot I that thou were slawe.

De Hugelino Comite de Pize

Off the Erl Hugelyn of Pyze the langour
Ther may no tonge telle for pitee.
But litel out of Pize stant a tour,
In whiche tour in prisoun put was he,
And with hym been his litel children thre,
The eldeste scarsly fyf yeer was of age.
Allas, Fortune, it was greet crueltee
Swiche briddes for to putte in swiche a cage!

Dampned was he to dyen in that prisoun,
For Roger, which that Bisshop was of Pize,
Hadde on hym maad a fals suggestioun,
Thurgh which the peple gan upon hym rise,
And putten hym to prisoun in swich wise
As ye han herd, and mete and drynke he hadde
So smal that wel unnethe it may suffise,
And therwithal it was ful povre and badde.

And on a day bifil, that in that hour
Whan that his mete wont was to be broght,
The gayler shette the dores of the tour;
He herde it wel, but he spak right noght—

3600 which. 3611 *wel om.*

And in his herte anon ther fil a thoght,
That they for hunger wolde doon hym dyen.
"Allas," quod he, "allas, that I was wroght!"
Therwith the teeris fillen from hise eyen.

His yonge sone, that thre yeer was of age,
Unto hym seyde, "Fader, why do ye wepe?
Whanne wol the gayler bryngen our potage?
Is ther no morsel breed that ye do kepe?
I am so hungry that I may nat slepe.
Now wolde God that I myghte slepen evere!
Thanne sholde nat hunger in my wombe crepe,
Ther is nothyng but breed that me were levere."

Thus day by day this child bigan to crye,
Til in his fadres barm adoun it lay,
And seyde, "Farewel, fader, I moot dye!"
And kiste his fader, and dyde the same day.
And whan the woful fader deed it say,
For wo hise armes two he gan to byte,
And seyde, "Allas, Fortune and weylaway!
Thy false wheel my wo al may I wyte!"

Hise children wende that it for hunger was
That he his armes gnow, and nat for wo,
And seyde, "Fader, do nat so, allas!
But rather ete the flessh upon us two.
Oure flessh thou yaf us, take our flessh us fro,
And ete ynogh," right thus they to hym seyde;
And after that withinne a day or two
They leyde hem in his lappe adoun, and deyde.

Hymself, despeired, eek for hunger starf,
Thus ended is this myghty Erl of Pize.
From heigh estaat Fortune awey hym carf,
Of this tragedie it oghte ynough suffise.

3641 *us om.*

Whoso wol here it in a lenger wise,
Redeth the grete poete of Ytaille
That highte Dant, for he kan al devyse
Fro point to point, nat o word wol he faille.

Nero

Al though that Nero were vicius
As any feend that lith in helle adoun,
Yet he, as telleth us Swetonius,
This wyde world hadde in subjeccioun,
Bothe Est and West, South and Septemtrioun;
Of rubies, saphires, and of peerles white
Were alle hise clothes brouded up and doun,
For he in gemmes greetly gan delite.

Moore delicaat, moore pompous of array,
Moore proud was nevere emperour than he.
That ilke clooth that he hadde wered o day,
After that tyme he nolde it nevere see.
Nettes of gold-threed hadde he greet plentee,
To fisshe in Tybre, whan hym liste pleye.
Hise lustes were al lawe in his decree,
For Fortune as his freend hym wolde obeye.

He Rome brende for his delicasie;
The senatours he slow upon a day,
To heere how men wolde wepe and crie;
And slow his brother, and by his suster lay.
His mooder made he in pitous array,
For he hir wombe slitte, to biholde
Wher he conceyved was, so weilaway
That he so litel of his mooder tolde!

No teere out of hise eyen for that sighte
Ne cam; but seyde, "A fair womman was she."
Greet wonder is how that he koude or myghte
Be domesman of hir dede beautee.

3657 *South* North.

The wyn to bryngen hym comanded he,
And drank anon; noon oother wo he made,
Whan myght is joyned unto crueltee,
Allas, to depe wol the venym wade!

In yowthe a maister hadde this emperour
To techen hym lettrure and curteisye,
For of moralitee he was the flour,
As in his tyme, but if bookes lye.
And whil this maister hadde of hym maistrye,
He maked hym so konnyng and so sowple,
That longe tyme it was, er tirannye
Or any vice dorste on hym uncowple.

This Seneca, of which that I devyse,
By-cause Nero hadde of hym swich drede,
(For he fro vices wolde hym chastise
Discreetly as by word, and nat by dede)
"Sire," wolde he seyn, "an emperour moot nede
Be vertuous and hate tirannye."—
For which he in a bath made hym to blede
On bothe hise armes, til he moste dye.

This Nero hadde eek of acustumaunce
In youthe agayns his maister for to ryse,
Which afterward hym thoughte greet grevaunce;
Therfore he made hym dyen in this wise,
But nathelees, this Seneca the wise
Chees in a bath to dye in this manere,
Rather than han anoother tormentise,
And thus hath Nero slayn his maister deere.

Now fil it so, that Fortune liste no lenger
The hye pryde of Nero to cherice;
For though that he was strong, yet was she strenger;
She thoughte thus, "By God, I am to nyce

3686 teche. 3707 any oother.

To sette a man that is fulfild of vice
In heigh degree, and emperour hym calle.
By God, out of his sete I wol hym trice,
Whan he leest weneth, sonnest shal he falle."

The peple roos upon hym on a nyght
For his defaute, and whan he it espied
Out of hise dores anoon he hath hym dight
Allone, and ther he wende han been allied
He knokked faste, and ay the moore he cried,
The faster shette they the dores alle.
For drede of this hym thoughte that he dyed,
And wente his wey, no lenger dorste he calle.

The peple cride, and rombled up and doun,
That with his erys herde he how they seyde,
"Where is this false tiraunt, this Neroun?"
For fere almoost out of his wit he breyde,
And to hise goddes pitously he preyde
For socour, but it myghte nat bityde.
For drede of this hym thoughte that he deyde,
And ran into a gardin hym to hyde.

And in this gardyn foond he cherles tweye,
That seten by a fyr greet and reed,
And to thise cherles two he gan to preye
To sleen hym and to girden of his heed,
That to his body whan that he were deed
Were no despit ydoon, for his defame.
Hymself he slow, he koude no bettre reed,
Of which Fortune lough and hadde a game.

De Oloferno

Was nevere capitayn under a kyng
That regnes mo putte in subjeccioun,
Ne strenger was in feeld of alle thyng

As in his tyme, ne gretter of renoun,
Ne moore pompous in heigh presumpcioun,
Than Oloferne, which Fortune ay kiste
So likerously, and ladde hym up and doun
Til that his heed was of er that he wiste.

Nat oonly that this world hadde hym in awe
For lesynge of richesse or libertee,
But he made every man reneyen his lawe.
"Nabugodonosor was god," seyde hee,
"Noon oother god sholde adoured bee."
Agayns his heeste no wight dorste trespace,
Save in Bethulia, a strong citee,
Where Eliachim a preest was of that place.

But taak kepe of the deeth of Oloferne;
Amydde his hoost he dronke lay a nyght,
Withinne his tente, large as is a berne;
And yet for al his pompe and al his myght
Judith, a womman, as he lay upright
Slepynge, his heed of smoot, and from his tente
Ful privelyshe stal from every wight,
And with his heed unto hir toun she wente.

De Rege Anthiocho illustri

What nedeth it of kyng Anthiochus
To telle his hye roial magestee,
His hye pride, hise werkes venymous?
For swich another was ther noon as he,
Rede which that he was in Machabee,
And rede the proude wordes that he seyde,
And why he fil fro heigh prosperitee,
And in an hill how wrecchedly he deyde.

3751 *he om.*

Fortune hym hadde enhaunced so in pride
That verraily he wende he myghte attayne
Unto the sterres upon every syde,
And in balance weyen ech montayne,
And alle the floodes of the see restrayne.
And Goddes peple hadde he moost in hate;
Hem wolde he sleen in torment and in payne,
Wenynge that God ne myghte his pride abate.

And for that Nichanore and Thymothee
Of Jewes weren venquysshed myghtily,
Unto the Jewes swich an hate hadde he
That he bad greithen his chaar ful hastily,
And swoor, and seyde, ful despitously,
Unto Jerusalem he wolde eft-soone,
To wreken his ire on it ful cruelly;
But of his purpos he was let ful soone.

God for his manace hym so soore smoot
With invisible wounde, ay incurable,
That in hise guttes carf it so and boot
That hise peynes weren importable.
And certeinly, the wreche was resonable,
For many a mannes guttes dide he peyne,
But from his purpos cursed and dampnable
For al his smert he wolde hym nat restreyne;

But bad anon apparaillen his hoost,
And sodeynly, er he was of it war,
God daunted al his pride and al his boost,
For he so soore fil out of his char,
That it hise lemes and his skyn totar,
So that he neyther myghte go ne ryde,
But in a chayer men aboute hym bar
Al forbrused, bothe bak and syde.

The wreche of God hym smoot so cruelly
That thurgh his body wikked wormes crepte;
And therwithal he stank so horribly
That noon of al his meynee that hym kepte
Wheither so he wook or ellis slepte,
Ne myghte noght for stynk of hym endure.
In this meschief he wayled and eek wepte,
And knew God lord of every creature.

To all his hoost and to hymself also
Ful wlatsom was the stynk of his careyne,
No man ne myghte hym bere to ne fro,
And in this stynk and this horrible peyne
He starf ful wrecchedly in a monteyne.
Thus hath this robbour and this homycide,
That many a man made to wepe and pleyne,
Swich gerdoun as bilongeth unto pryde.

De Alexandro

The storie of Alisaundre is so commune
That every wight that hath discrecioun
Hath herd somwhat or al of his fortune.
This wyde world, as in conclusioun,
He wan by strengthe, or for his hye renoun
They weren glad for pees unto hym sende.
The pride of man and beest he leyde adoun
Wher-so he cam, unto the worldes ende.

Comparison myghte nevere yet been maked
Bitwixen hym and another conquerour,
For al this world for drede of hym hath quaked.
He was of knyghthod and of fredom flour,
Fortune hym made the heir of hir honour.
Save wyn and wommen nothyng myghte aswage
His hye entente in armes and labour,
So was he ful of leonyn corage.

3807 *so om.*; horriblely. 3832 *was om.* 3834 no man.

What pris were it to hym, though I yow tolde
Of Darius, and an hundred thousand mo,
Of kynges, princes, erles, dukes bolde,
Whiche he conquered and broghte hem into wo?
I seye, as fer as man may ryde or go,
The world was his, what sholde I moore devyse?
For though I write or tolde yow everemo,
Of his knyghthode it myghte nat suffise.

Twelf yeer he regned, as seith Machabee,
Philippes sone of Macidoyne he was,
That first was kyng in Grece the contree.
O worthy gentil Alisandre, allas,
That evere sholde fallen swich a cas!
Empoysoned of thyn owene folk thou weere;
Thy sys Fortune hath turned into aas
And yet for thee ne weep she never a teere.

Who shal me yeven teeris to compleyne
The deeth of gentillesse and of franchise,
That al the world weelded in his demeyne?
And yet hym thoughte it myghte nat suffise,
So ful was his corage of heigh emprise.
Allas, who shal me helpe to endite
False Fortune, and poyson to despise,
The whiche two of al this wo I wyte?

De Julio Cesare

By wisedom, manhede, and by gret labour
From humble bed to roial magestee
Up roos he, Julius the conquerour,
That wan al thoccident by land and see
By strengthe of hand, or elles by tretee,
And unto Rome made hem tributarie;
And sitthe of Rome the emperour was he,
Til that Fortune weex his adversarie.

3852 *yet om.* 3861 *gret om.*

O myghty Cesar, that in Thessalie
Agayn Pompeus, fader thyn in lawe,
That of the Orient hadde al the chivalrye
As fer as that the day bigynneth dawe,
Thou thurgh thy knyghthod hast hem take and slawe,
Save fewe folk that with Pompeus fledde,
Thurgh which thou puttest al thorient in awe,
Thanke Fortune, that so wel thee spedde!

But now a litel while I wol biwaille
This Pompeus, this noble governour
Of Rome, which that fleigh at this bataille,
I seye, oon of hise men, a fals traitour,
His heed of-smoot to wynnen hym favour
Of Julius, and hym the heed he broghte;
Allas, Pompeye, of thorient conquerour,
That Fortune unto swich a fyn thee broghte!

To Rome agayn repaireth Julius,
With his triumphe lauriat ful hye;
But on a tyme Brutus Cassius
That evere hadde of his hye estaat envye,
Ful prively hath maad conspiracye
Agayns this Julius in subtil wise,
And caste the place in which he sholde dye
With boydekyns, as I shal yow devyse.

This Julius to the Capitolie wente
Upon a day, as he was wont to goon;
And in the Capitolie anon hym hente
This false Brutus and his othere foon,
And stiked hym with boydekyns anoon
With many a wounde; and thus they lete hym lye.
But nevere gronte he at no strook but oon,
Or elles at two, but if his storie lye.

So manly was this Julius of herte
And so wel lovede estaatly honestee,
That though hise deedly woundes soore smerte,
His mantel over hise hypes caste he,
For no man sholde seen his privetee.
And as he lay of diyng in a traunce,
And wiste verraily that deed was hee,
Of honestee yet hadde he remembraunce.

Lucan, to thee this storie I recomende,
And to Sweton, and to Valerie also,
That of this storie writen word and ende,
How that to thise grete conqueroures two
Fortune was first freend, and sitthe foo,
No man ne truste upon hire favour longe
But have hir in awayt for evere moo!
Witnesse on alle thise conqueroures stronge.

Cresus

This riche Cresus whilom kyng of Lyde,
Of whiche Cresus Cirus soore hym dradde,
Yet was he caught amyddes al his pryde,
And to be brent men to the fyr hym ladde.
But swich a reyn doun fro the welkne shadde
That slow the fyr, and made hym to escape;
But to be war no grace yet he hadde,
Til Fortune on the galwes made hym gape.

Whanne he escaped was, he kan nat stente
For to bigynne a newe werre agayn;
He wende wel, for that Fortune hym sente
Swich hap that he escaped thurgh the rayn,
That of hise foos he myghte nat be slayn;
And eek a swevene upon a nyght he mette,
Of which he was so proud and eek so fayn
That in vengeance he al his herte sette.

3910 Valerius. 3912, 3916 conquerours.

Upon a tree he was, as that hym thoughte,
Ther Jupiter hym wessh bothe bak and syde,
And Phebus eek a fair towaille hym broughte,
To dryen hym with; and therfore wax his pryde,
And to his doghter that stood hym bisyde,
Which that he knew in heigh science habounde,
He bad hir telle hym what it signyfyde,
And she his dreem bigan right thus expounde.

"The tree," quod she, "the galwes is to meene,
And Juppiter bitokneth snow and reyn,
And Phebus with his towaille so clene,
Tho been the sonne stremes for to seyn.
Thou shalt anhanged be, fader, certeyn;
Reyn shal thee wasshe, and sonne shal thee drye."
Thus warnede hym ful plat and ful pleyn,
His doghter, which that called was Phanye.

Anhanged was Cresus, the proude kyng,
His roial trone myghte hym nat availle.
Tragedie is noon oother maner thyng,
Ne kan in syngyng crye ne biwaille,
But for that Fortune alwey wole assaille
With unwar strook the regnes that been proude;
For whan men trusteth hir, thanne wol she faille,
And covere hir brighte face with a clowde.

3944 *stremes* bemes. 3947 warned. 3951 Tragedies. 3953 *for om.*

Explicit Tragedia.

Heere stynteth the Knyght the Monk of his tale.

PROLOGUE TO THE NONNES PREESTES TALE

The Prologue of the Nonnes Preestes Tale.

"Hoo!" quod the Knyght, "good sire, namoore of this,
That ye han seyd is right ynough, ywis,
And muchel moore, for litel hevynesse
Is right ynough to muche folk, I gesse.
I seye for me, it is a greet disese
Where as men han been in greet welthe and ese,
To heeren of hir sodeyn fal, allas!
And the contrarie is joye and greet solas,
As whan a man hath been in povre estaat,
And clymbeth up, and wexeth fortunat,
And there abideth in prosperitee.
Swich thyng is gladsom, as it thynketh me,
And of swich thyng were goodly for to telle."
"Ye," quod our Hoost, "by seinte Poules belle,
Ye seye right sooth! This Monk, he clappeth lowde,
He spak, how Fortune covered with a clowde—
I noot nevere what—and also of a 'Tragedie'—
Right now ye herde; and pardee, no remedie
It is for to biwaille ne compleyne
That that is doon; and als it is a peyne,
As ye han seyd, to heere of hevynesse.
Sire Monk, namoore of this, so God yow blesse!
Youre tale anoyeth al this compaignye;
Swich talkyng is nat worth a boterflye,
For ther-inne is ther no desport ne game.
Wherfore sir Monk, or daun Piers by youre name,
I pray yow hertely, telle us somwhat elles,
For sikerly, nere clynkyng of youre belles

3957 *of om.* 3970 seint. 3982 *or om.*

That on your bridel hange on every syde,
By hevene kyng, that for us alle dyde,
I sholde er this han fallen doun for sleepe,
Althogh the slough had never been so deepe;
Thanne hadde your tale al be toold in veyn.
For, certeinly, as that thise clerkes seyn,
Where as a man may have noon audience,
Noght helpeth it to tellen his sentence.
And wel I woot the substance is in me,
If any thyng shal wel reported be.
Sir, sey somwhat of huntyng, I yow preye."
"Nay," quod this Monk, "I have no lust to pleye;
Not lat another telle as I have toold."
Thanne spak oure Hoost, with rude speche and boold,
And seyde unto the Nonnes Preest anon,
"Com neer, thou preest, com hyder, thou, sir John,
Telle us swich thyng as may oure hertes glade;
Be blithe, though thou ryde upon a jade.
What thogh thyn hors be bothe foul and lene?
If he wol serve thee, rekke nat a bene!
Looke that thyn herte be murie everemo."
"Yis sir," quod he, "yis, Hoost, so moot I go,
But I be myrie, ywis, I wol be blamed."
And right anon his tale he hath attamed,
And thus he seyde unto us everichon,
This sweete preest, this goodly man sir John.

THE NONNES PREESTES TALE

Heere bigynneth the Nonnes Preestes tale of the Cok and Hen, Chauntecleer and Pertelote.

A povre wydwe, somdel stape in age,
Was whilom dwellyng in a narwe cotage
Biside a greve, stondynge in a dale.
This wydwe, of which I telle yow my tale,
Syn thilke day that she was last a wyf,
In pacience ladde a ful symple lyf,
For litel was hir catel and hir rente.
By housbondrie, of swich as God hir sente,
She foond hirself and eek hire doghtren two.
Thre large sowes hadde she, and namo,
Three keen, and eek a sheep that highte Malle.
Fut sooty was hir bour and eek hire halle,
In which she eet ful many a sklendre meel—
Of poynaunt sauce hir neded never a deel.
No deyntee morsel passed thurgh hir throte,
Hir diete was accordant to hir cote.
Repleccioun ne made hir nevere sik,
Attempree diete was al hir phisik,
And exercise, and hertes suffisaunce.
The goute lette hir nothyng for to daunce,
Napoplexie shente nat hir heed.
No wyn ne drank she, neither whit ne reed,
Hir bord was served moost with whit and blak,
Milk and broun breed, in which she foond no lak,
Seynd bacoun, and somtyme an ey or tweye,
For she was as it were a maner deye.
A yeerd she hadde, enclosed al aboute
With stikkes, and a drye dych withoute,
In which she hadde a Cok, heet Chauntecleer,
In al the land of crowyng nas his peer.

His voys was murier than the murie orgon
On messedayes, that in the chirche gon.
Wel sikerer was his crowyng in his logge,
Than is a clokke, or an abbey orlogge.
By nature he crew eche ascencioun
Of the equynoxial in thilke toun;
For whan degrees fiftene weren ascended,
Thanne crew he, that it myghte nat been amended.
His coomb was redder than the fyn coral,
And batailled, as it were a castel wal.
His byle was blak, and as the jeet it shoon,
Lyk asure were hise legges and his toon,
Hise nayles whiter than the lylye flour,
And lyk the burned gold was his colour.
This gentil cok hadde in his governaunce
Sevene hennes, for to doon al his plesaunce,
Whiche were hise sustres and his paramours,
And wonder lyk to hym as of colours;
Of whiche the faireste hewed on hir throte
Was cleped faire damoysele Pertelote.
Curteys she was, discreet, and debonaire
And compaignable, and bar hyrself so faire
Syn thilke day that she was seven nyght oold,
That trewely she hath the herte in hoold
Of Chauntecleer loken in every lith.
He loved hir so, that wel was hym therwith.
But swiche a joye was it to here hem synge
Whan that the brighte sonne gan to sprynge,
In sweete accord, "My lief is faren in londe,"—
For thilke tyme, as I have understonde,
Beestes and briddes koude speke and synge.
And so bifel, that in the dawenynge,
As Chauntecleer, among hise wyves alle,
Sat on his perche, that was in the halle,
And next hym sat this faire Pertelote,

4053 whitter. 4068 bigan.

This Chauntecleer gan gronen in his throte
As man that in his dreem is drecched soore.
And whan that Pertelote thus herde hym roore
She was agast, and seyde, "O herte deere,
What eyleth yow, to grone in this manere?
Ye been a verray sleper, fy for shame!"
And he answerde and seyde thus, "Madame,
I pray yow that ye take it nat agrief.
By God, me thoughte I was in swich meschief
Right now, that yet myn herte is soore afright.
Now God," quod he, "my swevene recche aright,
And kepe my body out of foul prisoun.
Me mette how that I romed up and doun
Withinne our yeerd, wheer as I saugh a beest
Was lyk an hound, and wolde han maad areest
Upon my body, and han had me deed.
His colour was bitwixe yelow and reed,
And tipped was his tayl and bothe hise eeris
With blak, unlyk the remenant of hise heeris;
His snowte smal, with glowynge eyen tweye.
Yet of his look, for feere almoost I deye!
This caused me my gronyng, doutelees."
"Avoy!" quod she, "Fy on yow hertelees!
Allas," quod she, "for by that God above
Now han ye lost myn herte and al my love!
I kan nat love a coward, by my feith,
For certes, what so any womman seith,
We alle desiren, if it myghte bee,
To han housbondes hardy, wise, and free,
And secree, and no nygard, ne no fool,
Ne hym that is agast of every tool,
Ne noon avauntour; by that God above,
How dorste ye seyn for shame unto youre love
That any thyng myghte make yow afred?
Have ye no mannes herte, and han a berd?
Allas, and konne ye been agast of swevenys?

No thyng, God woot, but vanitee in swevene is!
Swevenes engendren of repleccioun̄s,
And ofte of fume and of compleccioun̄s,
Whan humours been to habundant in a wight.
Certes, this dreem which ye han met tonyght
Cometh of greet superfluytee
Of youre rede colera, pardee,
Which causeth folk to dreden in hir dremes
Of arwes, and of fyre with rede lemes,
Of grete beestes, that they wol hem byte,
Of contekes, and of whelpes grete and lyte;
Right as the humour of malencolie
Causeth ful many a man in sleep to crie
For feere of blake beres, or boles blake,
Or elles blake develes wole hem take.
Of othere humours koude I telle also
That werken many a man in sleep ful wo,
But I wol passe as lightly as I kan.
Lo Catoun, which that was so wys a man,
Seyde he nat thus, 'ne do no fors of dremes'?
Now, sire," quod she, "whan ye flee fro the bemes,
For goddes love as taak som laxatyf!
Up peril of my soule, and of my lyf,
I conseille yow the beste, I wol nat lye,
That bothe of colere and of malencolye
Ye purge yow; and for ye shal nat tarie,
Though in this toun is noon apothecarie,
I shal myself to herbes techen yow,
That shul been for youre hele and for youre prow.
And in oure yeerd tho herbes shal I fynde,
The whiche han of hir propretee by kynde
To purge yow bynethe and eek above.
Foryet nat this, for Goddes owene love!
Ye been ful coleryk of compleccioun;
Ware the sonne in his ascencioun
Ne fynde yow nat repleet of humours hoote.

And if it do, I dar wel leye a grote
That ye shul have a fevere terciane,
Or an agu that may be youre bane.
A day or two ye shul have digestyves
Of wormes, er ye take youre laxatyves
Of lawriol, centaure, and fumetere,
Or elles of ellebor that groweth there,
Of katapuce, or of gaitrys beryis,
Of herbe yve, growyng in oure yeerd, ther mery is!
Pekke hem up right as they growe, and ete hem yn!
Be myrie, housbonde, for youre fader kyn,
Dredeth no dreem, I kan sey yow namoore!"
"Madame," quod he, "graunt mercy of youre loore,
But nathelees, as touchyng Daun Catoun,
That hath of wysdom swich a greet renoun,
Though that he bad no dremes for to drede,
By God, men may in olde bookes rede
Of many a man moore of auctorite
Than evere Caton was, so moot I thee,
That al the revers seyn of this sentence,
And han wel founden by experience
That dremes been significaciouns
As wel of joye as of tribulaciouns
That folk enduren in this lif present.
Ther nedeth make of this noon argument,
The verray preeve sheweth it in dede.
Oon of the gretteste auctours that men rede
Seith thus, that whilom two felawes wente
On pilgrimage in a ful good entente;
And happed so, they coomen in a toun
Wher as ther was swich congregacioun
Of peple, and eek so streit of herbergage,
That they ne founde as muche as o cotage
In which they bothe myghte logged bee;
Wherfore they mosten of necessitee

4174 auctour.

As for that nyght departen compaignye,
And ech of hem gooth to his hostelrye,
And took his loggyng as it wolde falle.
That oon of hem was logged in a stalle,
Fer in a yeerd, with oxen of the plough;
That oother man was logged wel ynough,
As was his aventure or his fortune,
That us governeth alle as in commune.
And so bifel, that longe er it were day
This man mette in his bed, ther as he lay,
How that his felawe gan upon hym calle
And seyde, 'Allas, for in an oxes stalle
This nyght I shal be mordred, ther I lye!
Now help me, deere brother, or I dye;
In alle haste com to me!' he sayde.
This man out of his sleep for feere abrayde;
But whan that he was wakened of his sleep,
He turned hym and took of it no keep.
Hym thoughte, his dreem nas but a vanitee.
Thus twies in his slepyng dremed hee,
And atte thridde tyme yet his felawe
Cam, as hym thoughte, and seide, 'I am now slawe,
Bihoold my bloody woundes depe and wyde;
Arys up erly in the morwe-tyde,
And at the west gate of the toun,' quod he,
'A carte ful of donge ther shaltow se,
In which my body is hid ful prively.
Do thilke carte arresten boldely;
My gold caused my mordre, sooth to sayn.'—
And tolde hym every point, how he was slayn,
With a ful pitous face, pale of hewe;
And truste wel, his dreem he foond ful trewe.
For on the morwe, as soone as it was day,
To his felawes in he took the way,
And whan that he cam to this oxes stalle,
After his felawe he bigan to calle.

The hostiler answerde hym anon,
And seyde, 'Sire, your felawe is agon,
As soone as day he wente out of the toun.'
This man gan fallen in suspecioun,
Remembrynge on hise dremes that he mette,
And forth he gooth, no lenger wolde he lette,
Unto the westgate of the toun; and fond
A dong carte, as it were to donge lond,
That was arrayed in that same wise,
As ye han herd the dede man devyse.
And with an hardy herte he gan to crye,
'Vengeance and justice of this felonye;
My felawe mordred is this same nyght,
And in this carte he lith gapyng upright.
I crye out on the ministres,' quod he,
'That sholden kepe and reulen this citee!
Harrow! allas, heere lith my felawe slayn!'
What sholde I moore unto this tale sayn?
The peple out-sterte, and caste the cart to grounde,
And in the myddel of the dong they founde
The dede man, that mordred was al newe.
O blisful God, that art so just and trewe!
Lo, howe that thou biwreyest mordre alway!
Mordre wol out, that se we, day by day.
Mordre is so wlatsom and abhomynable
To God that is so just and resonable,
That he ne wol nat suffre it heled be,
Though it abyde a yeer, or two, or thre.
Mordre wol out, this my conclusioun.
And right anon ministres of that toun
Han hent the carter, and so soore hym pyned,
And eek the hostiler so soore engyned
That they biknewe hire wikkednesse anon,
And were anhanged by the nekke bon.
Heere may men seen, that dremes been to drede!
And certes, in the same book I rede

Right in the nexte chapitre after this—
I gabbe nat, so have I joye or blis—
Two men that wolde han passed over see
For certeyn cause, into a fer contree,
If that the wynd ne hadde been contrarie,
That made hem in a citee for to tarie,
That stood ful myrie upon an haven-syde—
But on a day, agayn the even-tyde,
The wynd gan chaunge, and blew right as hem leste.
Jolif and glad they wente unto hir reste,
And casten hem ful erly for to saille,
But herkneth, to that o man fil a greet mervaille;
That oon of hem, in slepyng as he lay,
Hym mette a wonder dreem agayn the day.
Hym thoughte a man stood by his beddes syde,
And hym comanded that he sholde abyde,
And seyde hym thus, 'If thou tomorwe wende
Thow shalt be dreynt; my tale is at an ende.'
He wook, and tolde his felawe what he mette,
And preyde hym his viage for to lette,
As for that day, he preyde hym to byde.
His felawe, that lay by his beddes syde,
Gan for to laughe and scorned him ful faste.
'No dreem,' quod he, 'may so myn herte agaste
That I wol lette for to do my thynges.
I sette nat a straw by thy dremynges,
For swevenes been but vanytees and japes.
Men dreme al day of owles or of apes,
And of many a maze therwithal.
Men dreme of thyng that nevere was, ne shal;
But sith I see that thou wolt heere abyde
And thus forslewthen wilfully thy tyde,
God woot it reweth me, and have good day.'
And thus he took his leve and wente his way;
But er that he hadde half his cours yseyled,

4274 *for om.*

Noot I nat why, ne what myschaunce it eyled,
But casuelly the shippes botme rente,
And ship and men under the water wente
In sighte of othere shippes it bisyde,
That with hem seyled at the same tyde.
And therfore, faire Pertelote so deere,
By swiche ensamples olde yet maistow leere,
That no man sholde been to recchelees
Of dremes, for I seye thee doutelees
That many a dreem ful soore is for to drede.
Lo, in the lyf of Seint Kenelm I rede,
That was Kenulphus sone, the noble kyng,
Of Mercenrike how Kenelm mette a thyng.
A lite er he was mordred, on a day
His mordre in his avysioun he say.
His norice hym expowned every deel
His swevene, and bad hym for to kepe hym weel
For traisoun, but he nas but seven yeer oold,
And therfore litel tale hath he toold
Of any dreem, so hooly is his herte.
By God, I hadde levere than my sherte
That ye hadde rad his legende, as have I.
Dame Pertelote, I sey yow trewely,
Macrobeus, that writ the avisioun
In Affrike of the worthy Cipioun,
Affermeth dremes, and seith that they been
Warnynge of thynges, that men after seen.
And forther-moore I pray yow looketh wel
In the olde testament of Daniel,
If he heeld dremes any vanitee!
Reed eek of Joseph, and ther shul ye see
Wher dremes be somtyme, I sey nat alle,
Warnynge of thynges that shul after falle.
Looke of Egipte the kyng, daun Pharao,
His baker and his butiller also,

4302 Mertenrike.

Wher they ne felte noon effect in dremes!
Whoso wol seken actes of sondry remes
May rede of dremes many a wonder thyng.
Lo Cresus, which that was of Lyde kyng,
Mette he nat that he sat upon a tree,
Which signified, he sholde anhanged bee?
Lo here Adromacha, Ectores wyf,
That day that Ector sholde lese his lyf
She dremed on the same nyght biforn
How that the lyf of Ector sholde be lorn,
If thilke day he wente into bataille.
She warned hym, but it myghte nat availle;
He wente for to fighte natheles,
But he was slayn anon of Achilles.
But thilke is al to longe for to telle,
And eek it is ny day, I may nat dwelle.
Shortly I seye, as for conclusioun,
That I shal han of this avisioun
Adversitee, and I seye forthermoor
That I ne telle of laxatyves no stoor,
For they been venymes, I woot it weel,
I hem diffye, I love hem never a deel.
  Now let us speke of myrthe, and stynte al this;
Madame Pertelote, so have I blis,
Of o thyng God hath sent me large grace,
For whan I se the beautee of youre face,
Ye been so scarlet reed aboute youre eyen,
It maketh al my drede for to dyen.
For, al so siker as In principio
Mulier est hominis confusio,—
Madame, the sentence of this Latyn is,
'Womman is mannes joye and al his blis.'
For whan I feele a-nyght your softe syde,
Al be it that I may nat on yow ryde,
For that oure perche is maad so narwe, allas!
I am so ful of joye and of solas,

That I diffye bothe swevene and dreem."
And with that word he fly doun fro the beem,
For it was day, and eke hise hennes alle;
And with a chuk he gan hem for to calle,
For he hadde founde a corn lay in the yerd.
Real he was, he was namoore aferd;
And fethered Pertelote twenty tyme,
And trad as ofte, er that it was pryme.
He looketh as it were a grym leoun,
And on hise toos he rometh up and doun,
Hym deigned nat to sette his foot to grounde.
He chukketh whan he hath a corn yfounde,
And to hym rennen thanne hise wyves alle.
Thus roial as a prince is in an halle,
Leve I this Chauntecleer in his pasture,
And after wol I telle his aventure.

Whan that the monthe in which the world bigan
That highte March, whan God first maked man,
Was compleet, and passed were also
Syn March bigan, thritty dayes and two,
Bifel that Chauntecleer in al his pryde,
Hise sevene wyves walkynge by his syde,
Caste up hise eyen to the brighte sonne,
That in the signe of Taurus hadde yronne
Twenty degrees and oon, and somwhat moore;
And knew by kynde, and by noon oother loore,
That it was pryme, and crew with blisful stevene.
"The sonne," he seyde, "is clomben upon hevene
Fourty degrees and oon, and moore, ywis.
Madame Pertelote, my worldes blis,
Herkneth thise blisful briddes how they synge,
And se the fresshe floures how they sprynge.
Ful is myn herte of revel and solas."
But sodeynly hym fil a sorweful cas,
For evere the latter ende of joye is wo.

4368 *that om.*

God woot that worldly joye is soone ago,
And if a rethor koude faire endite,
He in a cronycle saufly myghte it write,
As for a sovereyn notabilitee.
Now every wys man, lat him herkne me:
This storie is al so trewe, I undertake,
As is the book of Launcelot de Lake,
That wommen holde in ful greet reverence.
Now wol I come agayn to my sentence.
A colfox, ful of sly iniquitee,
That in the grove hadde wonned yeres three,
By heigh ymaginacioun forn-cast,
The same nyght thurghout the hegges brast
Into the yerd, ther Chauntecleer the faire
Was wont, and eek hise wyves, to repaire;
And in a bed of wortes stille he lay,
Til it was passed undren of the day,
Waitynge his tyme on Chauntecleer to falle,
As gladly doon thise homycides alle
That in await liggen to mordre men.
O false mordrour, lurkynge in thy den!
O newe Scariot! newe Genyloun!
False dissymulour, O Greek Synoun
That broghtest Troye al outrely to sorwe!
O Chauntecleer, acursed be that morwe
That thou into that yerd flaugh fro the bemes!
Thou were ful wel ywarned by thy dremes
That thilke day was perilous to thee;
But what that God forwoot moot nedes bee,
After the opinioun of certein clerkis.
Witnesse on hym, that any parfit clerk is,
That in scole is greet altercacioun
In this mateere, and greet disputisoun,
And hath been of an hundred thousand men;—
But I ne kan nat bulte it to the bren,
As kan the hooly doctour Augustyn,

Or Boece or the Bisshop Bradwardyn,—
Wheither that Goddes worthy forwityng
Streyneth me nedefully to doon a thyng,
(Nedely clepe I symple necessitee)
Or elles, if free choys be graunted me
To do that same thyng, or do it noght,
Though God forwoot it, er that it was wroght;
Or if his wityng streyneth never a deel
But by necessitee condicioneel,—
I wil nat han to do of swich mateere;
My tale is of a Cok, as ye may heere,
That took his conseil of his wyf, with sorwe,
To walken in the yerd, upon that morwe
That he hadde met that dreem, that I of tolde.
Wommennes conseils been ful ofte colde;
Wommannes conseil broghte us first to wo,
And made Adam fro Paradys to go,
Ther as he was ful myrie, and wel at ese.
But for I noot to whom it myght displese,
If I conseil of wommen wolde blame,
Passe over, for I seye it in my game.
Rede auctours, wher they trete of swich mateere,
And what they seyn of wommen ye may heere.
Thise been the cokkes wordes, and nat myne,
I kan noon harm of no womman divyne.
Faire in the soond, to bathe hire myrily,
Lith Pertelote, and alle hir sustres by,
Agayn the sonne; and Chauntecleer so free
Soong murier than the mermayde in the see—
For Phisiologus seith sikerly
How that they syngen wel and myrily.
And so bifel, that as he cast his eye
Among the wortes on a boterflye,
He was war of this fox that lay ful lowe.
Nothyng ne liste hym thanne for to crowe,

4448 *fro* out of.

But cride anon, "cok! cok!" and up he sterte,
As man that was affrayed in his herte.
For naturecly a beest desireth flee
Fro his contrarie, if he may it see,
Though he never erst hadde seyn it with his eye.
This Chauntecleer, whan he gan hym espye,
He wolde han fled, but that the fox anon
Seyde, "Gentil sire, allas, wher wol ye gon?
Be ye affrayed of me that am youre freend?
Now certes, I were worse than a feend
If I to yow wolde harm or vileynye.
I am nat come your conseil for tespye,
But trewely, the cause of my comynge
Was oonly for to herkne how that ye synge.
For trewely, ye have as myrie a stevene
As any aungel hath that is in hevene.
Therwith ye han in musyk moore feelynge
Than hadde Boece, or any that kan synge.
My lord youre fader—God his soule blesse!—
And eek youre mooder, of hir gentillesse
Han in myn hous ybeen, to my greet ese;
And certes, sire, ful fayn wolde I yow plese.
But for men speke of syngyng, I wol seye,
So moote I brouke wel myne eyen tweye,
Save yow I herde nevere man yet synge
As dide youre fader in the morwenynge.
Certes, it was of herte al that he song!
And for to make his voys the moore strong,
He wolde so peyne hym, that with bothe hise eyen
He moste wynke, so loude he wolde cryen,
And stonden on his tiptoon therwithal,
And strecche forth his nekke long and smal.
And eek he was of swich discrecioun,
That ther nas no man in no regioun,
That hym in song or wisedom myghte passe.

4482 *hath om.* 4489 yow seye. 4491 herde I.

I have wel rad in daun Burnel the Asse
Among hise vers, how that ther was a cok,
For that a preestes sone yaf hym a knok,
Upon his leg, whil he was yong and nyce,
He made hym for to lese his benefice.
But certeyn, ther nys no comparisoun
Bitwixe the wisedom and discrecioun
Of youre fader, and of his subtiltee.
Now syngeth, sire, for seinte charitee,
Lat se konne ye youre fader countrefete!"
This Chauntecleer hise wynges gan to bete,
As man that koude his traysoun nat espie,
So was he ravysshed with his flaterie.
  Allas, ye lordes! many a fals flatour
Is in youre courtes, and many a losengeour,
That plesen yow wel moore, by my feith,
Than he that soothfastnesse unto yow seith.
Redeth Ecclesiaste of Flaterye;
Beth war, ye lordes, of hir trecherye.
This Chauntecleer stood hye upon his toos,
Strecchynge his nekke, and heeld hise eyen cloos,
And gan to crowe loude for the nones,
And daun Russell the fox stirte up atones,
And by the gargat hente Chauntecleer,
And on his bak toward the wode hym beer,
For yet ne was ther no man that hym sewed.
  O destinee, that mayst nat been eschewed!
Allas, that Chauntecleer fleigh fro the bemes!
Allas, his wyf ne roghte nat of dremes!
And on a Friday fil al this meschaunce.
O Venus, that art goddesse of plesaunce!
Syn that thy servant was this Chauntecleer,
And in thy servyce dide al his poweer,
Moore for delit, than world to multiplye,
Why woltestow suffre hym on thy day to dye?
O Gaufred, deere Maister soverayn!

That whan thy worthy kyng Richard was slayn
With shot, compleynedest his deeth so soore,
Why ne hadde I now thy sentence and thy loore,
The Friday for to chide, as diden ye?—
For on a Friday soothly slayn was he.
Thanne wolde I shewe yow, how that I koude pleyne
For Chauntecleres drede and for his peyne.
Certes, swich cry ne lamentacioun
Was nevere of ladyes maad, whan Ylioun
Was wonne, and Pirrus with his streite swerd,
Whan he hadde hent kyng Priam by the berd,
And slayn hym, as seith us Eneydos,
As maden alle the hennes in the clos,
Whan they had seyn of Chauntecleer the sighte.
But sovereynly dame Pertelote shrighte
Ful louder than dide Hasdrubales wyf,
Whan that hir housbonde hadde lost his lyf,
And that the Romayns hadde brend Cartage;
She was so ful of torment and of rage
That wilfully into the fyr she sterte,
And brende hirselven with a stedefast herte.
O woful hennes, right so criden ye,
As whan that Nero brende the Citee
Of Rome, cryden senatoures wyves,
For that hir husbondes losten alle hir lyves,
Withouten gilt this Nero hath hem slayn.
Now I wole turne to my tale agayn.
  This sely wydwe, and eek hir doghtres two,
Herden thise hennes crie, and maken wo,
And out at dores stirten they anon,
And syen the fox toward the grove gon,
And bar upon his bak the cok away;
And cryden, "Out! harrow! and weylaway!
Ha! ha! the fox!" and after hym they ran,
And eek with staves many another man,

4552 sodeynly. 4561 senatours. 4564 turne I wole.

Ran Colle, oure dogge, and Talbot, and Gerland,
And Malkyn with a dystaf in hir hand,
Ran cow and calf, and eek the verray hogges,
So were they fered for berkyng of the dogges,
And shoutyng of the men and wommen eek,
They ronne so, hem thoughte hir herte breek;
They yolleden as feendes doon in helle,
The dokes cryden as men wolde hem quelle,
The gees for feere flowen over the trees,
Out of the hyve cam the swarm of bees,
So hydous was the noyse, a! benedicitee!
Certes, he Jakke Straw and his meynee
Ne made nevere shoutes half so shille,
Whan that they wolden any Flemyng kille,
As thilke day was maad upon the fox.
Of bras they broghten bemes and of box,
Of horn, of boon, in whiche they blewe and powped,
And therwithal they skriked and they howped,
It seemed as that hevene sholde falle!
Now, goode men, I pray yow, herkneth alle.
  Lo, how Fortune turneth sodeynly
The hope and pryde eek of hir enemy
This cok, that lay upon the foxes bak,
In al his drede unto the fox he spak,
And seyde, "Sire, if that I were as ye,
Yet wolde I seyn, as wys God helpe me,
'Turneth agayn, ye proude cherles alle,
A verray pestilence upon yow falle,
Now am I come unto the wodes syde,
Maugree youre heed, the cok shal heere abyde,
I wol hym ete, in feith, and that anon.' "
The fox answerde, "In feith, it shal be don."
And as he spak that word, al sodeynly
This cok brak from his mouth delyverly,
And heighe upon a tree he fleigh anon.

4575 *eek om.* 4576 *were they om.* 4594 *eek om.*

And whan the fox saugh that he was gon,
"Allas!" quod he, "O Chauntecleer, allas!
I have to yow," quod he, "ydoon trespas,
In as muche as I maked yow aferd,
Whan I yow hente and broght into this yerd.
But, sire, I dide it of no wikke entente,
Com doun, and I shal telle yow what I mente;
I shal seye sooth to yow, God help me so."
"Nay, thanne," quod he, "I shrewe us bothe two,
And first I shrewe myself bothe blood and bones,
If thou bigyle me ofter than ones.
Thou shalt namoore, thurgh thy flaterye,
Do me to synge and wynke with myn eye;
For he that wynketh whan he sholde see,
Al wilfully, God lat him nevere thee."
"Nay," quod the fox, "but God yeve hym meschaunce,
That is so undiscreet of governaunce,
That jangleth, whan he sholde holde his pees."
Lo, swich it is for to be recchelees,
And necligent, and truste on flaterye!
But ye that holden this tale a folye,
As of a fox, or of a cok and hen,
Taketh the moralite, goode men;
For seint Paul seith, that al that writen is,
To oure doctrine it is ywrite, ywis.
Taketh the fruyt, and lat the chaf be stille.
Now goode God, if that it be thy wille,
As seith my lord, so make us alle goode men,
And brynge us to his heighe blisse. Amen.

4618 any ofter.

Heere is ended the Nonnes Preestes tale.

Note.—The sixteen lines of Epilogue to this Tale are here omitted. The tone, and in part, the very words, are a repetition of the Prologue to the Monkes Tale. This cannot have been Chaucer's intention, and the Epilogue may therefore be either spurious, or a trial link, rejected after the Monkes Prologue was written.

GROUP C.

THE PHISICIENS TALE

Heere folweth the Phisiciens tale.

Ther was, as telleth Titus Livius,
A knyght that called was Virginius,
Fulfild of honour and of worthynesse,
And strong of freendes, and of greet richesse.
This knyght a doghter hadde by his wyf,
No children hadde he mo in al his lyf.
Fair was this mayde in excellent beautee
Aboven every wight that man may see.
For Nature hath with sovereyn diligence
Yformed hir in so greet excellence,
As though she wolde seyn, "Lo, I, Nature,
Thus kan I forme and peynte a creature
Whan that me list; who kan me countrefete?
Pigmalion noght, though he ay forge and bete,
Or grave, or peynte, for I dar wel seyn
Apelles, Zanzis sholde werche in veyn
Outher to grave or peynte, or forge, or bete,
If they presumed me to countrefete.
For He that is the former principal
Hath maked me his vicaire general
To forme and peynten erthely creaturis
Right as me list, and ech thyng in my cure is
Under the Moone, that may wane and waxe,
And for my werk right nothyng wol I axe.
My lord and I been ful of oon accord;
I made hir to the worship of my lord,
So do I alle myne othere creatures,
What colour that they han, or what figures."

2 was called.

Thus semeth me that Nature wolde seye.
This mayde of age twelf yeer was and tweye,
In which that Nature hadde swich delit.
For right as she kan peynte a lilie whit,
And reed a rose, right with swich peynture
She peynted hath this noble creature,
Er she were born, upon hir lymes fre,
Where as by right swiche colours sholde be.
And Phebus dyed hath hir treses grete,
Lyk to the stremes of his burned heete;
And if that excellent was hir beautee,
A thousand foold moore vertuous was she.
In hire ne lakked no condicioun
That is to preyse, as by discrecioun;
As wel in goost as body chast was she,
For which she floured in virginitee
With alle humylitee and abstinence,
With alle attemperaunce and pacience,
With mesure eek of beryng and array.
Discreet she was in answeryng alway,
Though she were wise Pallas, dar I seyn,
Hir facound eek ful wommanly and pleyn,
No countrefeted termes hadde she
To seme wys, but after hir degree
She spak, and alle hir wordes, moore and lesse,
Sownynge in vertu and in gentillesse.
Shamefast she was in maydens shamefastnesse,
Constant in herte, and evere in bisynesse
To dryve hir out of ydel slogardye.
Bacus hadde of hire mouth right no maistrie;
For wyn and youthe dooth Venus encresse,
As man in fyr wol casten oille or greesse.
And of hir owene vertu unconstreyned,
She hath ful ofte tyme syk hir feyned,
For that she wolde fleen the compaignye

50 *and* a. 55 in *om.* 60 wasten.

Wher likly was to treten of folye,
As is at feestes, revels, and at daunces
That been occasions of daliaunces.
Swich thynges maken children for to be
To soone rype and boold, as men may se,
Which is ful perilous, and hath been yoore;
For al to soone may they lerne loore
Of booldnesse, whan she woxen is a wyf.
And ye maistresses, in youre olde lyf,
That lordes doghtres han in governaunce,
Ne taketh of my wordes no displesaunce;
Thenketh that ye been set in governynges
Of lordes doghtres, oonly for two thynges;
Outher for ye han kept youre honestee,
Or elles ye han falle in freletee,
And knowen wel ynough the olde daunce,
And han forsaken fully swich meschaunce
For everemo; therfore for Cristes sake,
To teche hem vertu looke that ye ne slake.
A theef of venysoun, that hath forlaft
His likerousnesse, and al his olde craft,
Kan kepe a forest best of any man.
Now kepeth wel, for if ye wole, ye kan.
Looke wel that ye unto no vice assente,
Lest ye be dampned for your wikke entente.
For who so dooth, a traitour is, certeyn;
And taketh kepe of that that I shal seyn,
Of alle tresons, sovereyn pestilence
Is whan a wight bitrayseth innocence.
Ye fadres and ye moodres, eek also,
Though ye han children, be it oon or two,
Youre is the charge of al hir surveiaunce
Whil that they been under youre governaunce.
Beth war, if by ensample of youre lyvynge,
Or by youre necligence in chastisynge,

69 thyng.

That they perisse, for I dar wel seye,
If that they doon ye shul it deere abeye,
Under a shepherde softe and necligent
The wolf hath many a sheep and lamb to-rent.
Suffyseth oon ensample now as here,
For I moot turne agayn to my mateere.
This mayde, of which I wol this tale expresse,
So kepte hirself, hir neded no maistresse.
For in hir lyvyng maydens myghten rede,
As in a book, every good word or dede
That longeth to a mayden vertuous,
She was so prudent and so bountevous.
For which the fame out-sprong on every syde
Bothe of hir beautee and hir bountee wyde,
That thurgh that land they preised hire echone
That loved vertu; save envye allone,
That sory is of oother mennes wele,
And glad is of his sorwe and his unheele—
The doctour maketh this descripcioun.
This mayde upon a day wente in the toun
Toward a temple, with hir mooder deere,
As is of yonge maydens the manere.
Now was ther thanne a justice in that toun,
That governour was of that regioun,
And so bifel this juge hise eyen caste
Upon this mayde, avysynge hym ful faste
As she cam forby, ther as this juge stood.
Anon his herte chaunged and his mood,
So was he caught with beautee of this mayde,
And to hymself ful pryvely he sayde,
"This mayde shal be myn, for any man."
Anon the feend into his herte ran,
And taughte hym sodeynly, that he by slyghte
The mayden to his purpos wynne myghte.
For certes, by no force, ne by no meede,
Hym thoughte he was nat able for to speede;

For she was strong of freendes, and eek she
Confermed was in swich soverayn bountee,
That wel he wiste he myghte hir nevere wynne,
As for to maken hir with hir body synne.
For which, by greet deliberacioun,
He sente after a cherl, was in the toun,
Which that he knew for subtil and for boold.
This Juge unto this cherl his tale hath toold
In secree wise, and made hym to ensure
He sholde telle it to no creature,
And if he dide, he sholde lese his heed.
Whan that assented was this cursed reed,
Glad was this juge, and maked him greet cheere,
And yaf hym yiftes preciouse and deere.
Whan shapen was al hir conspiracie
Fro point to point, how that his lecherie
Parfourned sholde been ful subtilly,
(As ye shul heere it after openly)
Hoom gooth the cherl, that highte Claudius.
This false juge, that highte Apius,
So was his name—for this is no fable,
But knowen for historial thyng notable;
The sentence of it sooth is out of doute—
This false juge gooth now faste aboute
To hasten his delit al that he may.
And so bifel soone after on a day,
This false juge, as telleth us the storie,
As he was wont, sat in his consistorie,
And yaf his doomes upon sondry cas.
This false cherl cam forth a ful greet pas
And seyde, "Lord, if that it be youre wille,
As dooth me right upon this pitous bille
In which I pleyne upon Virginius;
And if that he wol seyn it is nat thus,
I wol it preeve, and fynde good witnesse
That sooth is, that my bille wol expresse."

The juge answerde, "Of this in his absence,
I may nat yeve diffynytyve sentence.
Lat do hym calle, and I wol gladly heere.
Thou shalt have al right and no wrong heere."
Virginius cam to wite the juges wille,
And right anon was rad this cursed bille.
The sentence of it was, as ye shul heere:
"To yow, my lord, Sire Apius so deere,
Sheweth youre povre servant Claudius,
How that a knyght called Virginius
Agayns the lawe, agayn al equitee,
Holdeth expres agayn the wyl of me
My servant, which that is my thral by right,
Which fro myn hous was stole upon a nyght,
Whil that she was ful yong; this wol I preeve
By witnesse, lord, so that it nat yow greeve.
She nys his doghter, nat what so he seye.
Wherfore to yow, my lord the Juge, I preye
Yeld me my thral, if that it be youre wille."
Lo, this was al the sentence of his bille.
Virginius gan upon the cherl biholde,
But hastily, er he his tale tolde,
And wolde have preeved it as sholde a knyght,
And eek by witnessyng of many a wight,
That it was fals, that seyde his adversarie,
This cursed juge wolde no thyng tarie,
Ne heere a word moore of Virginius,
But yaf his juggement and seyde thus:
"I deeme anon this cherl his servant have,
Thou shalt no lenger in thyn hous hir save.
Go, bryng hir forth, and put hir in our warde.
The cherl shal have his thral, this I awarde."
And whan this worthy knyght Virginius,
Thurgh sentence of this justice Apius,
Moste by force his deere doghter yeven

172 diffynyue.

Unto the juge in lecherie to lyven,
He gooth hym hoom, and sette him in his halle,
And leet anon his deere doghter calle,
And with a face deed as asshen colde,
Upon hir humble face he gan biholde
With fadres pitee stikynge thurgh his herte,
Al wolde he from his purpos nat converte.
"Doghter," quod he, "Virginia, by thy name,
Ther been two weyes, outher deeth or shame
That thou most suffre, allas, that I was bore!
For nevere thou deservedest wherfore
To dyen with a swerd, or with a knyf.
O deere doghter, ender of my lyf,
Which I have fostred up with swich plesaunce,
That thou were nevere out of my remembraunce.
O doghter, which that art my laste wo,
And in my lyf my laste joye also,
O gemme of chastitee, in pacience
Take thou thy deeth, for this is my sentence,
For love and nat for hate, thou most be deed;
My pitous hand moot smyten of thyn heed.
Allas, that evere Apius the say!
Thus hath he falsly jugged the to day."
And tolde hir al the cas, as ye bifore
Han herd, nat nedeth for to telle it moore.
"O mercy, deere fader," quod this mayde,
And with that word she bothe hir armes layde
About his nekke, as she was wont to do.
The teeris bruste out of hir eyen two,
And seyde, "Goode fader, shal I dye?
Is ther no grace? is ther no remedye?"
"No, certes, deere doghter myn," quod he.
"Thanne yif me leyser, fader myn," quod she,
"My deeth for to compleyne a litel space,
For, pardee, Jepte yaf his doghter grace

223 *of* o.

For to compleyne, er he hir slow, allas!
And God it woot, no thyng was hir trespas
But for she ran hir fader for to see
To welcome hym with greet solempnitee."
And with that word she fil aswowne anon;
And after whan hir swownyng is agon
She riseth up and to hir fader sayde,
"Blissed be God that I shal dye a mayde;
Yif me my deeth, er that I have a shame.
Dooth with youre child youre wyl, a Goddes name."
And with that word she preyed hym ful ofte
That with his swerd he wolde smyte softe,
And with that word aswowne doun she fil.
Hir fader with ful sorweful herte and wil
Hir heed of smoot, and by the top it hente,
And to the juge he gan it to presente
As he sat yet in doom, in consistorie.
And whan the juge it saugh, as seith the storie,
He bad to take hym and anhange hym faste.
But right anon a thousand peple in thraste
To save the kynght for routhe and for pitee;
For knowen was the false iniquitee.
The peple anon hath suspect of this thyng,
By manere of the cherles chalangyng,
That it was by the assent of Apius—
They wisten wel that he was lecherus;
For which unto this Apius they gon
And caste hym in a prisoun right anon,
Ther as he slow hymself, and Claudius
That servant was unto this Apius,
Was demed for to hange upon a tree,
But that Virginius, of his pitee,
So preyde for hym, that he was exiled;
And elles, certes, he had been bigyled.
The remenant were anhanged, moore and lesse,

271 *was* and.

That were consentant of this cursednesse.
Heere men may seen, how synne hath his merite.
Beth war, for no man woot whom God wol smyte
In no degree, ne in which manere wyse
The worm of conscience may agryse
Of wikked lyf, though it so pryvee be
That no man wóot therof but God and he.
For be he lewed man, or ellis lered,
He noot how soone that he shal been afered.
Therfore I rede yow this conseil take,
Forsaketh synne, er synne yow forsake.

Heere endeth the Phisiciens tale.

EPILOGUE

The wordes of the Hoost to the Phisicien and the Pardoner.

Oure Hooste gan to swere as he were wood;
"Harrow!" quod he, "by nayles and by blood!
This was a fals cherl and a fals justice!
As shameful deeth as herte may devyse
Come to thise juges and hire advocatz!
Algate this sely mayde is slayn, allas!
Allas! to deere boughte she beautee!
Wherfore I seye al day, as men may see
That yiftes of Fortune and of Nature
Been cause of deeth to many a creature.
[Hir beautee was hir deeth, I dar wel sayn;
Allas, so pitously as she was slayn!]
Of bothe yiftes that I speke of now
Men han ful ofte moore harm than prow.
But trewely, myn owene maister deere,
This is a pitous tale for to heere.
But nathelees, passe over is no fors;
I pray to God so save thy gentil cors,
And eek thyne urynals and thy jurdanes,
Thyn ypocras and eek thy Galianes
And every boyste ful of thy letuarie,
God blesse hem, and oure lady Seinte Marie!
So moot I theen, thou art a propre man,
And lyk a prelat, by Seint Ronyan.
Seyde I nat wel? I kan nat speke in terme;
But wel I woot thou doost myn herte to erme,
That I almoost have caught a cardyacle.
By corpus bones, but I have triacle,
Or elles a draughte of moyste and corny ale,

287 Hoost. 291 false juges. 297-8 *not in MS.* 300 for harm. 308 seint.

Or but I heere anon a myrie tale,
Myn herte is lost, for pitee of this mayde!
Thou beelamy, thou Pardoner," he sayde,
"Telle us som myrthe or japes right anon."
"It shal be doon," quod he, "by Seint Ronyon;
But first," quod he, "heere at this ale-stake,
I wol bothe drynke and eten of a cake."
And right anon the gentils gonne to crye,
"Nay, lat hym telle us of no ribaudye!
Telle us som moral thyng that we may leere
Som wit, and thanne wol we gladly heere!"
"I graunte, ywis," quod he, "but I moot thynke
Upon som honeste thyng, while that I drynke."

THE PARDONERS PROLOGUE

Heere folweth the Prologe of the Pardoners tale.

Radix malorum est Cupiditas Ad Thimotheum 6°.

Lordynges—quod he—in chirches whan I preche,
I peyne me to han an hauteyn speche,
And rynge it out as round as gooth a belle,
For I kan al by rote that I telle.
My theme is alwey oon and evere was,
"Radix malorum est Cupiditas."
First I pronounce whennes that I come,
And thanne my bulles shewe I, alle and some;
Oure lige lordes seel on my patente,
That shewe I first, my body to warente,
That no man be so boold, ne preest ne clerk,
Me to destourbe of Cristes hooly werk.
And after that thanne telle I forth my tales,
Bulles of popes and of cardynales,
Of patriarkes and bishopes I shewe,
And in Latyn I speke a wordes fewe,
To saffron with my predicacioun,
And for to stire hem to devocioun.
Thanne shewe I forth my longe cristal stones,
Ycrammed ful of cloutes and of bones;
Relikes been they, as wenen they echoon.
Thanne have I in latoun a sholder-boon
Which that was of an hooly Jewes sheepe.
"Goode men," I seye, "taak of my wordes keepe:
If that this boon be wasshe in any welle,
If cow, or calf, or sheep, or oxe swelle,
That any worm hath ete, or worm ystonge,
Taak water of that welle, and wassh his tonge,

350 *I om.*

And it is hool anon; and forthermoor,
Of pokkes and of scabbe and every soor
Shal every sheepe be hool that of this welle
Drynketh a draughte; taak kepe eek what I telle,
If that the goode man that the beestes oweth,
Wol every wyke, er that the cok hym croweth,
Fastynge, drinken of this welle a draughte,
As thilke hooly Jew oure eldres taughte,
Hise beestes and his stoor shal multiplie.
And, sire, also it heeleth jalousie;
For though a man be falle in jalous rage,
Lat maken with this water his potage,
And nevere shal he moore his wyf mystriste,
Though he the soothe of hir defaute wiste,
Al had she taken preestes two or thre.
Heere is a miteyn, eek, that ye may se:
He that his hand wol putte in this mitayn,
He shal have multipliyng of his grayn
What he hath sowen, be it whete or otes,
So that he offre pens, or elles grotes.
Goode men and wommen, o thyng warne I yow,
If any wight be in this chirche now,
That hath doon synne horrible, that he
Dar nat for shame of it yshryven be,
Or any womman, be she yong or old,
That hath ymaad hir housbonde cokewold,
Swich folk shal have no power ne no grace
To offren to my relikes in this place.
And who so fyndeth hym out of swich fame,
He wol come up and offre, on Goddes name,
And I assoille him, by the auctoritee
Which that by bulle ygraunted was to me."
By this gaude have I wonne, yeer by yeer,
An hundred mark, sith I was pardoner.
I stonde lyk a clerk in my pulpet,

363 drinke. 382 ymaked. 386 *He* They. 387 *him* hem.

And whan the lewed peple is doun yset,
I preche so, as ye han herd bifoore,
And telle an hundred false japes moore.
Thanne peyne I me to strecche forth the nekke,
And est and west upon the peple I bekke,
As dooth a dowve sittynge on a berne.
Myne handes and my tonge goon so yerne
That it is joye to se my bisynesse.
Of avarice and of swich cursednesse
Is al my prechyng, for to make hem free
To yeven hir pens; and namely, unto me!
For myn entente is nat but for to wynne,
And no thyng for correccioun of synne.
I rekke nevere, whan that they been beryed,
Though that hir soules goon a blakeberyed,
For certes, many a predicacioun
Comth ofte tyme of yvel entencioun.
Som for plesance of folk, and flaterye,
To been avaunced by ypocrisye,
And som for veyne glorie, and som for hate.
For whan I dar noon oother weyes debate,
Thanne wol I stynge hym with my tonge smerte
In prechyng, so that he shal nat asterte
To been defamed falsly, if that he
Hath trespased to my bretheren, or to me.
For though I telle noght his propre name,
Men shal wel knowe that it is the same
By signes, and by othere circumstances.
Thus quyte I folk that doon us displesances,
Thus spitte I out my venym, under hewe
Of hoolynesse, to semen hooly and trewe.
But shortly, myn entente I wol devyse;
I preche of no thyng but for coveityse.
Therfore my theme is yet, and evere was,
"Radix malorum est Cupiditas."

405 that *om.*

Thus kan I preche agayn that same vice
Which that I use, and that is avarice.
But though myself be gilty in that synne,
Yet kan I maken oother folk to twynne
From avarice, and soore to repente;
But that is nat my principal entente.
I preche no thyng but for coveitise;
Of this mateere it oghte ynogh suffise.
Thanne telle I hem ensamples many oon
Of olde stories longe tyme agoon,
For lewed peple loven tales olde;
Swiche thynges kan they wel reporte and holde.
What? trowe ye, the whiles I may preche,
And wynne gold and silver for I teche,
That I wol lyve in poverte wilfully?
Nay, nay, I thoghte it nevere, trewely.
For I wol preche and begge in sondry landes,
I wol nat do no labour with myne handes,
Ne make baskettes, and lyve therby,
By cause I wol nat beggen ydelly.
I wol noon of the apostles countrefete,
I wol have moneie, wolle, chese, and whete,
Al were it yeven of the povereste page,
Or of the povereste wydwe in a village,
Al sholde hir children sterve for famyne.
Nay, I wol drynke licour of the vyne,
And have a joly wenche in every toun.
But herkneth, lordynges, in conclusioun:
Your likyng is, that I shal telle a tale.
Now have I dronke a draughte of corny ale,
By God, I hope I shal yow telle a thyng
That shal by resoun been at youre likyng.
For though myself be a ful vicious man,
A moral tale yet I yow telle kan,
Which I am wont to preche, for to wynne.
Now hoold youre pees, my tale I wol bigynne.

THE PARDONERS TALE

Heere bigynneth the Pardoners tale.

In Flaundres whilom was a compaignye
Of yonge folk, that haunteden folye,
As riot, hasard, stywes, and tavernes,
Wher as with harpes, lutes, and gyternes
They daunce and pleyen at dees, bothe day and nyght,
And eten also and drynken over hir myght,
Thurgh which they doon the devel sacrifise
Withinne that develes temple in cursed wise,
By superfluytee abhomynable.
Hir othes been so grete and so dampnable
That it is grisly for to heere hem swere.
Oure blissed lordes body they to-tere,
Hem thoughte that Jewes rente hym noght ynough,
And ech of hem at otheres synne lough.
And right anon thanne comen tombesteres,
Fetys and smale, and yonge frutesteres,
Syngeres with harpes, baudes, wafereres,
Whiche been the verray develes officeres
To kyndle and blowe the fyr of lecherye,
That is annexed unto glotonye.
The hooly writ take I to my witnesse,
That luxurie is in wyn and dronkenesse.
Lo, how that dronken Looth unkyndely
Lay by hise doghtres two unwityngly;
So dronke he was, he nyste what he wroghte.
Herodes, whoso wel the stories soghte,
Whan he of wyn was repleet at his feeste,
Right at his owene table he yaf his heeste
To sleen the Baptist John, ful giltelees.

Senec seith a good word, doutelees;
He seith, he kan no difference fynde
Bitwix a man that is out of his mynde,
And a man which that is dronkelewe,
But that woodnesse fallen in a shrewe
Persevereth lenger than dooth dronkenesse.
O glotonye, ful of cursednesse!
O cause first of oure confusioun!
O original of oure dampnacioun
Til Crist hadde boght us with his blood agayn!
Lo, how deere, shortly for to sayn,
Aboght was thilke cursed vileynye!
Corrupt was al this world for glotonye!
Adam oure fader, and his wyf also,
Fro Paradys to labour and to wo
Were dryven for that vice, it is no drede;
For whil that Adam fasted, as I rede,
He was in Paradys, and whan that he
Eet of the fruyt deffended on the tree,
Anon he was out-cast to wo and peyne.
O glotonye, on thee wel oghte us pleyne!
O, wiste a man how manye maladyes
Folwen of excesse and of glotonyes,
He wolde been the moore mesurable
Of his diete, sittynge at his table.
Allas, the shorte throte, the tendre mouth
Maketh that est and west and north and south
In erthe, in eir, in water, man to swynke
To gete a glotoun deyntee mete and drynke.
Of this matiere, O Paul! wel kanstow trete,
Mete unto wombe and wombe eek unto mete
Shal God destroyen bothe, as Paulus seith.
Allas, a foul thyng is it, by my feith!
To seye this word, and fouler is the dede
Whan man so drynketh of the white and rede,
That of his throte he maketh his pryvee

Thurgh thilke cursed superfluitee.
The Apostel wepyng seith ful pitously,
"Ther walken manye of whiche yow toold have I,
I seye it now wepyng with pitous voys,
That they been enemys of Cristes croys,
Of whiche the ende is deeth, wombe is hir god."
O wombe! O bely! O stynkyng cod!
Fulfilled of donge and of corrupcioun,
At either ende of thee foul is the soun;
How greet labour and cost is thee to fynde,
Thise cookes, how they stampe, and streyne, and grynde,
And turnen substaunce into accident,
To fulfillen al thy likerous talent!
Out of the harde bones knokke they
The mary, for they caste noght awey,
That may go thurgh the golet softe and swoote;
Of spicerie, of leef, and bark, and roote,
Shal been his sauce ymaked by delit,
To make hym yet a newer appetit.
But certes, he that haunteth swiche delices
Is deed, whil that he lyveth in tho vices.
A lecherous thyng is wyn, and dronkenesse
Is ful of stryvyng and of wrecchednesse.
O dronke man, disfigured is thy face!
Sour is thy breeth, foul artow to embrace,
And thurgh thy dronke nose semeth the soun,
As though thou seydest ay, "Sampsoun! Sampsoun!"
And yet, God woot, Sampsoun drank nevere no wyn!
Thou fallest, as it were a styked swyn;
Thy tonge is lost, and al thyn honeste cure
For dronkenesse is verray sepulture
Of mannes wit and his discrecioun,
In whom that drynke hath dominacioun.
He kan no conseil kepe, it is no drede;
Now kepe yow fro the white and fro the rede,

532 *That they* Ther.

And namely, fro the white wyn of Lepe,
That is to selle in Fysshstrete, or in Chepe.
This wyn of Spaigne crepeth subtilly
In othere wynes, growynge faste by,
Of which ther ryseth swich fumositee,
That whan a man hath dronken draughtes thre
And weneth that he be at hoom in Chepe,
He is in Spaigne, right at the toune of Lepe,
Nat at the Rochele, ne at Burdeux toun;
And thanne wol he seye "Sampsoun, Sampsoun!"
But herkneth, lordes, o word I yow preye,
That alle the sovereyn actes, dar I seye,
Of victories in the Olde Testament,
Thurgh verray God that is omnipotent
Were doon in abstinence and in preyere.
Looketh the Bible, and ther ye may it leere.
Looke, Attilla, the grete conquerour,
Deyde in his sleepe, with shame and dishonour,
Bledynge ay at his nose in dronkenesse.
A capitayn sholde lyve in sobrenesse;
And over al this avyseth yow right wel,
What was comaunded unto Lamwel
Nat Samuel, but Lamwel, seye I;
Redeth the Bible and fynde it expresly,
Of wyn yevyng to hem that han justise.
Namoore of this, for it may wel suffise.
And now that I have spoken of glotonye,
Now wol I yow deffenden hasardrye.
Hasard is verray mooder of lesynges,
And of deceite and cursed forswerynges,
Blasphemyng of Crist, manslaughtre and wast also,
Of catel and of tyme, and forthermo
It is repreeve and contrarie of honour
For to ben holde a commune hasardour.
And ever the hyer he is of estaat,

589 *that om.*

The moore is he holden desolaat;
If that a prynce useth hasardrye,
In alle governaunce and policye
He is as by commune opinioun
Yholde the lasse in reputacioun.
Stilboun, that was a wys embassadour,
Was sent to Corynthe in ful greet honour,
Fro Lacidomye to maken hire alliaunce.
And whan he cam hym happede par chaunce,
That alle the gretteste that were of that lond
Pleyynge atte hasard he hem fond.
For which, as soone as it myghte be,
He stal hym hoom agayn to his contree,
And seyde, "Ther wol I nat lese my name,
Ne I wol nat take on me so greet defame.
Yow for to allie unto none hasardours.
Sendeth othere wise embassadours,
For by my trouthe me were levere dye
Than I yow sholde to hasardours allye.
For ye that been so glorious in honours
Shul nat allyen yow with hasardours,
As by my wyl, ne as by my tretee,"
This wise philosophre, thus seyde hee.
Looke eek, that to the kyng Demetrius
The kyng of Parthes, as the book seith us,
Sente him a paire of dees of gold, in scorn,
For he hadde used hasard therbiforn,
For which he heeld his glorie or his renoun
At no value or reputacioun.
Lordes may fynden oother maner pley
Honeste ynough, to dryve the day awey.
  Now wol I speke of othes false and grete
A word or two, as olde bookes trete.
Gret sweryng is a thyng abhominable,
And fals sweryng is yet moore reprevable.

606 happed. 621 *to om.*

The heighe God forbad swerying at al,
Witnesse on Mathew; but in special
Of swerying seith the hooly Jeremye,
"Thou shalt seye sooth thyne othes, and nat lye,
And swere in doom, and eek in rightwisnesse,"
But ydel swerying is a cursednesse.
Bihoold and se, that in the firste table
Of heighe Goddes heestes honurable
How that the seconde heeste of hym is this:
Take nat my name in ydel or amys.
Lo, rather he forbedeth swich swerying
Than homycide, or any cursed thyng!
I seye, that as by ordre thus it stondeth,
This knowen that hise heestes understondeth
How that the seconde heeste of God is that.
And forther-over I wol thee telle al plat,
That vengeance shal nat parten from his hous
That of hise othes is to outrageous—
"By Goddes precious herte and by his nayles,
And by the blood of Crist that is in Hayles,
Sevene is my chaunce and thyn is cynk and treye.
By Goddes armes, if thou falsly pleye,
This dagger shal thurghout thyn herte go!"
This fruyt cometh of the bicched bones two,
Forswerying, ire, falsnesse, homycide!
Now for the love of Crist, that for us dyde,
Lete youre othes bothe grete and smale.
But, sires, now wol I telle forth my tale.
Thise riotoures thre, of whiche I telle,
Longe erst er prime rong of any belle,
Were set hem in a taverne for to drynke.
And as they sat, they herde a belle clynke
Biforn a cors, was caried to his grave.
That oon of hem gan callen to his knave,
"Go bet," quod he, "and axe redily

661 riotours. 663 *for om.*

What cors is this, that passeth heer forby,
And looke, that thou reporte his name weel."
"Sir," quod this boy, "it nedeth neveradeel;
It was me toold, er ye cam heer two houres.
He was, pardee, an old felawe of youres,
And sodeynly he was yslayn to-nyght,
Fordronke, as he sat on his bench upright.
Ther cam a privee theef men clepeth Deeth,
That in this contree al the peple sleeth,
And with his spere he smoot his herte atwo,
And wente his wey withouten wordes mo.
He hath a thousand slayn this pestilence,
And maister, er ye come in his presence,
Me thynketh that it were necessarie
For to be war of swich an adversarie.
Beth redy for to meete hym everemoore,
Thus taughte me my dame, I sey namoore."
"By Seinte Marie," seyde this taverner,
"The child seith sooth, for he hath slayn this yeer
Henne over a mile, withinne a greet village
Bothe man and womman, child, and hyne, and page.
I trowe his habitacioun be there.
To been avysed, greet wysdom it were,
Er that he dide a man a dishonour."
"Ye, Goddes armes," quod this riotour,
"Is it swich peril with hym for to meete?
I shal hym seke, by wey and eek by strete,
I make avow to Goddes digne bones.
Herkneth, felawes, we thre been al ones;
Lat ech of us holde up his hand til oother,
And ech of us bicomen otheres brother,
And we wol sleen this false traytour Deeth.
He shal be slayn, which that so manye sleeth,
By Goddes dignitee, er it be nyght."
Togidres han thise thre hir trouthes plight,
To lyve and dyen, ech of hem for oother,

As though he were his owene ybore brother;
And up they stirte al dronken in this rage,
And forth they goon towardes that village,
Of which the taverner hadde spoke biforn.
And many a grisly ooth thanne han they sworn,
And Cristes blessed body they to-rente,
'Deeth shal be deed, if that they may hym hente.'
Whan they han goon nat fully half a mile,
Right as they wolde han troden over a stile,
An oold man and a povre with hem mette.
This olde man ful mekely hem grette,
And seyde thus, "Now, lordes, God yow see."
The proudeste of thise riotoures three
Answerde agayn, "What, carl, with sory grace,
Why artow al forwrapped save thy face?
Why lyvestow so longe in so greet age?"
This olde man gan looke in his visage,
And seyde thus, "For I ne kan nat fynde
A man, though that I walked in to Ynde,
Neither in citee nor in no village,
That wolde chaunge his youthe for myn age.
And therfore moot I han myn age stille
As longe tyme as it is Goddes wille.
Ne deeth, allas, ne wol nat han my lyf!
Thus walke I lyk a restelees kaityf,
And on the ground, which is my moodres gate,
I knokke with my staf bothe erly and late.
And seye, 'leeve mooder, leet me in!
Lo, how I vanysshe, flessh and blood and skyn!
Allas, whan shul my bones been at reste?
Mooder, with yow wolde I chaunge my cheste,
That in my chambre longe tyme hath be,
Ye, for an heyre-clowt to wrappe me.'
But yet to me she wol nat do that grace;
For which ful pale and welked is my face.

704 yborn. 705 *al* and. 716 riotours.

But, sires, to yow it is no curteisye
To speken to an old man vileynye,
But he trespasse in word, or elles in dede.
In hooly writ ye may yourself wel rede,
'Agayns an oold man, hoor upon his heed,
Ye sholde arise;' wherfore I yeve yow reed,
Ne dooth unto an oold man noon harm now,
Namoore than that ye wolde men did to yow
In age, if that ye so longe abyde,
And God be with yow where ye go or ryde.
I moote go thider, as I have to go."
"Nay, olde cherl, by God, thou shalt nat so,"
Seyde this oother hasardour anon.
"Thou partest nat so lightly, by Seint John.
Thou spak right now of thilke traytour Deeth,
That in this contree alle oure freendes sleeth.
Have heer my trouthe, as thou art his espye,
Telle where he is, or thou shalt it abye,
By God and by the hooly sacrament,
For soothly thou art oon of his assent
To sleen us yonge folk, thou false theef!"
"Now, sires," quod he, "if that ye be so leef
To fynde Deeth, turne up this croked wey,
For in that grove I lafte hym, by my fey,
Under a tree, and there he wole abyde.
Noght for your boost he wole him nothyng hyde,
Se ye that ook? right ther ye shal hym fynde,
God save yow that boghte agayn mankynde,
And yow amende." Thus seyde this olde man;
And everich of thise riotoures ran
Til he cam to that tree, and ther they founde
Of floryns fyne of gold ycoyned rounde
Wel ny an eighte busshels, as hem thoughte.
No lenger thanne after Deeth they soughte,
But ech of hem so glad was of that sighte,

768 riotours.

For that the floryns been so faire and brighte,
That doun they sette hem by this precious hoord.
The worste of hem, he spak the firste word,
"Bretheren," quod he, "taak kepe what I seye;
My wit is greet, though that I bourde and pleye.
This tresor hath Fortune unto us yeven,
In myrthe and joliftee oure lyf to lyven.
And lightly as it comth, so wol we spende.
Ey, Goddes precious dignitee, who wende
Today that we sholde han so fair a grace?
But myghte this gold be caried fro this place
Hoom to myn hous or elles unto youres,
(For wel ye woot that al this gold is oures)
Thanne were we in heigh felicitee.
But trewely, by daye it may nat bee;
Men wolde seyn that we were theves stronge,
And for oure owene tresor doon us honge.
This tresor moste ycaried be by nyghte,
As wisely and as slyly as it myghte.
Wherfore I rede that cut among us alle
Be drawe, and lat se wher the cut wol falle,
And he that hath the cut, with herte blithe
Shal renne to the towne, and that ful swithe,
And brynge us breed and wyn, ful prively;
And two of us shul kepen subtilly
This tresor wel, and if he wol nat tarie,
Whan it is nyght, we wol this tresor carie,
By oon assent, where as us thynketh best."
That oon of hem the cut broghte in his fest,
And bad hym drawe, and looke where it wol falle;
And it fil on the yongeste of hem alle,
And forth toward the toun he wente anon.
And al so soone, as that he was agon,
That oon of hem spak thus unto that oother,
"Thow knowest wel thou art my sworen brother,

796 *the om.* 806 gon. 807 *of hem om.* 808 sworn.

Thy profit wol I telle thee anon.
Thou woost wel, that oure felawe is agon,
And heere is gold, and that ful greet plentee,
That shal departed been among us thre.
But nathelees, if I kan shape it so
That it departed were among us two,
Hadde I nat doon a freendes torn to thee?"
That oother answerde, "I noot hou that may be?
He woot how that the gold is with us tweye;
What shal we doon? what shal we to hym seye?"
"Shal it be conseil?" seyde the firste shrewe,
"And I shal tellen, in a wordes fewe,
What we shal doon, and bryngen it wel aboute."
"I graunte," quod that oother, "out of doute,
That by my trouthe I shal thee nat biwreye."
"Now," quod the firste, "thou woost wel we be tweye,
And two of us shul strenger be than oon;
Looke whan that he is set, that right anoon
Arys, as though thou woldest with hym pleye,
And I shal ryve hym thurgh the sydes tweye,
Whil that thou strogelest with hym as in game.
And with thy daggere looke thou do the same,
And thanne shal al this gold departed be,
My deere freend, bitwixen me and thee.
Thanne may we bothe oure lustes all fulfille,
And pleye at dees right at oure owene wille."
And thus acorded been thise shrewes tweye
To sleen the thridde, as ye han herd me seye.

This yongeste, which that wente unto the toun,
Ful ofte in herte he rolleth up and doun
The beautee of thise floryns newe and brighte.
"O lord," quod he, "if so were that I myghte
Have al this tresor to my-self allone,
Ther is no man that lyveth under the trone
Of God, that sholde lyve so murye as I."
And atte laste the feend, oure enemy,

Putte in his thought that he sholde poyson beye,
With which he myghte sleen hise felawes tweye.
For why, the feend foond hym in swich lyvynge,
That he hadde leve hem to sorwe brynge;
For this was outrely his fulle entente,
To sleen hem bothe, and nevere to repente.
And forth he gooth, no lenger wolde he tarie,
Into the toun unto a pothecarie
And preyde hym that he hym wolde selle
Som poysoun, that he myghte hise rattes quelle,
And eek ther was a polcat in his hawe,
That, as he seyde, hise capouns hadde yslawe;
And fayn he wolde wreke hym, if he myghte,
On vermyn that destroyed hym by nyghte.
The pothecarie answerde, "and thou shalt have
A thyng, that al so God my soule save,
In al this world ther is no creature
That eten or dronken hath of this confiture
Noght but the montance of a corn of whete,
That he ne shal his lif anon forlete;
Ye, sterve he shal, and that in lasse while
Than thou wolt goon a pass nat but a mile,
This poysoun is so strong and violent."
This cursed man hath in his hond yhent
This poysoun in a box, and sith he ran
Into the nexte strete unto a man
And borwed hym of large botels thre;
And in the two his poyson poured he,
The thridde he kepte clene for his owene drynke,
For al the nyght he shoop hym for to swynke
In cariynge of the gold out of that place.
And whan this riotour, with sory grace,
Hadde filled with wyn his grete botels thre,
To hise felawes agayn repaireth he.
What nedeth it to sermone of it moore?

871 *of om.*

For right as they hadde cast his deeth bifoore
Right so they han him slayn, and that anon;
And whan that this was doon, thus spak that oon,
"Now lat us sitte and drynke, and make us merie,
And afterward we wol his body berie."
And with that word it happed hym, par cas,
To take the botel ther the poysoun was,
And drank, and yaf his felawe drynke also,
For which anon they storven bothe two.
But certes, I suppose that Avycen
Wroot nevere in no canoun, ne in no fen,
Mo wonder signes of empoisonyng
Than hadde thise wrecches two, er hir endyng.
Thus ended been thise homycides two,
And eek the false empoysoner also.
O cursed synne ful of cursednesse!
O traytours homycide! O wikkednesse!
O glotonye, luxurie, and hasardrye!
Thou blasphemour of Crist, with vileynye,
And othes grete, of usage and of pride,
Allas, mankynde! how may it bitide
That to thy Creatour which that the wroghte,
And with His precious herte-blood thee boghte,
Thou art so fals and so unkynde, allas!
Now, goode men, God foryeve yow youre trespas,
And ware yow fro the synne of avarice;
Myn hooly pardoun may yow alle warice,
So that ye offre nobles or sterlynges,
Or elles silver broches, spoones, rynges;
Boweth youre heed under this hooly bulle,
Com up, ye wyves, offreth of youre wolle;
Youre names I entre heer in my rolle anon,
Into the blisse of hevene shul ye gon.
I yow assoille by myn heigh power,
Yow that wol offre, as clene and eek as cleer

880 so as. 895 *ful of* of alle.

As ye were born—and lo, sires, thus I preche;
And Jesu Crist, that is oure soules leche,
So graunte yow his pardoun to receyve,
For that is best, I wol yow nat deceyve.
But sires, o word forgat I in my tale,
I have relikes and pardoun in my male
As faire as any man in Engelond,
Whiche were me yeven by the popes hond.
If any of yow wole of devocioun
Offren and han myn absolucioun,
Com forth anon, and kneleth heere adoun,
And mekely receyveth my pardoun,
Or elles taketh pardoun as ye wende,
Al newe and fressh at every miles ende,
So that ye offren alwey newe and newe
Nobles or pens, whiche that be goode and trewe.
It is an honour to everich that is heer,
That ye mowe have a suffisant pardoneer
Tassoille yow in contree as ye ryde,
For aventures whiche that may bityde.
Paraventure ther may fallen oon or two
Doun of his hors, and breke his nekke atwo.
Look, which a seuretee is it to yow alle
That I am in youre felaweship yfalle,
That may assoille yow, bothe moore and lasse,
Whan that the soule shal fro the body passe.
I rede that oure Hoost heere shal bigynne,
For he is moost envoluped in synne.
Com forth, sire Hoost, and offre first anon,
And thou shalt kisse my relikes everychon,
Ye, for a grote, unbokele anon thy purs.—
"Nay, nay," quod he, "thanne have I Cristes curs!"
"Lat be," quod he, "it shal nat be, so theech,
Thou woldest make me kisse thyn olde breech,
And swere it were a relyk of a seint,
Though it were with thy fundement depeint.

But by the croys which that seint Eleyne fond,
I wolde I hadde thy coillons in myn hond
In stide of relikes or of seintuarie.
Lat kutte hem of, I wol thee helpe hem carie,
They shul be shryned in an hogges toord."
This Pardoner answerde nat a word;
So wrooth he was, no word ne wolde he seye.
"Now," quod oure Hoost, "I wol no lenger pleye
With thee, ne with noon oother angry man."
But right anon the worthy knyght bigan,
Whan that he saugh that al the peple lough,
"Namoore of this, for it is right ynough.
Sir Pardoner, be glad and myrie of cheere;
And ye, sir Hoost, that been to me so deere,
I prey yow, that ye kisse the pardoner;
And Pardoner, I prey thee, drawe thee neer,
And, as we diden, lat us laughe and pleye."
Anon they kiste, and ryden forth hir weye.

954 *thee helpe* with thee.

Heere is ended the Pardoners tale.

GROUP D.

PROLOGUE OF THE WYVES TALE OF BATH

The Prologe of the Wyves tale of Bathe.

Experience, though noon auctoritee
Were in this world, were right ynogh to me
To speke of wo that is in mariage;
For, lordynges, sith I twelf yeer was of age,
Thonked be God, that is eterne on lyve,
Housbondes at chirche-dore I have had fyve—
For I so ofte have ywedded bee—
And alle were worthy men in hir degree.
But me was toold, certeyn, nat longe agoon is,
That sith that Crist ne wente nevere but onis
To weddyng in the Cane of Galilee,
That by the same ensample, taughte he me,
That I ne sholde wedded be but ones,
Herkne eek, lo, which a sharpe word for the nones,
Biside a welle Jesus, God and Man,
Spak in repreeve of the Samaritan.
"Thou hast yhad fyve housbondes," quod he,
"And thilke man the which that hath now thee
Is noght thyn housbonde;" thus seyde he, certeyn.
What that he mente ther by, I kan nat seyn;
But that I axe, why that the fifthe man
Was noon housbonde to the Samaritan?
How manye myghte she have in mariage?
Yet herde I nevere tellen in myn age
Upon this nombre diffinicioun.
Men may devyne, and glosen up and doun,

5 Ythonked. 12 *That om.; taughte he* thoughte. 14 *lo om.* 18 that.

But wel I woot expres withoute lye,
God bad us for to wexe and multiplye;
That gentil text kan I wel understonde.
Eek wel I woot, he seyde, myn housbonde
Sholde lete fader and mooder, and take me;
But of no nombre mencioun made he,
Of bigamye, or of octogamye;
Why sholde men speke of it vileynye?
Lo, heere the wise kyng, daun Salomon;
I trowe he hadde wyves mo than oon—
As, wolde God, it leveful were to me
To be refresshed half so ofte as he—
Which yifte of God hadde he, for alle hise wyvys?
No man hath swich that in this world alyve is.
God woot, this noble kyng, as to my wit,
The firste nyght had many a myrie fit
With ech of hem, so wel was hym on lyve!
Blessed be God, that I have wedded fyve;
Welcome the sixte, whan that evere he shal.
For sothe I wol nat kepe me chaast in al;
Whan myn housbonde is fro the world ygon
Som cristen man shal wedde me anon.
For thanne thapostle seith that I am free,
To wedde a Goddes half where it liketh me.
He seith, that to be wedded is no synne,
Bet is to be wedded than to brynne.
What rekketh me, thogh folk seye vileynye
Of shrewed Lameth and of bigamye?
I woot wel Abraham was an hooly man,
And Jacob eek, as ferforth as I kan,
And ech of hem hadde wyves mo than two,
And many another holy man also.
Whanne saugh ye evere in any manere age
That hye God defended mariage

29 *wel om.* 37 were leveful unto. 44 Yblessed. 49 *that om.* 51 *that om.* 58 *holy om.* 59 *any om.*

By expres word? I pray you, telleth me,
Or where comanded he virginitee?
I woot as wel as ye it is no drede,
Thapostel, whan he speketh of maydenhede;
He seyde, that precept therof hadde he noon.
Men may conseille a womman to been oon,
But conseillyng is no comandement;
He putte it in oure owene juggement.
For hadde God comanded maydenhede,
Thanne hadde he dampned weddyng with the dede;
And certein, if ther were no seed ysowe,
Virginitee, wherof thanne sholde it growe?
Poul dorste nat comanden, atte leeste,
A thyng of which his maister yaf noon heeste.
The dart is set up of virginitee;
Cacche who so may, who renneth best lat see.
But this word is nat taken of every wight,
But ther as God lust gyve it of his myght.
I woot wel, the apostel was a mayde;
But nathelees, thogh that he wroot and sayde
He wolde that every wight were swich as he,
Al nys but conseil to virginitee;
And for to been a wyf, he yaf me leve
Of indulgence, so it is no repreve
To wedde me, if that my make dye,
Withouten excepcioun of bigamye.
"Al were it good no womman for to touche,"
He mente, as in his bed or in his couche;
For peril is bothe fyr and tow tassemble;
Ye knowe what this ensample may resemble.
This is al and som, he heeld virginitee
Moore parfit than weddyng in freletee.
Freletee clepe I, but if that he and she
Wolde leden al hir lyf in chastitee.

64 Whan thapostel. 67 *No* nat. 73 Poul ne. 85 *that om.* 91 *he heeld* that. 92 *parfit* profiteth. 94 lede.

I graunte it wel, I have noon envie,
Thogh maydenhede preferre bigamye;
Hem liketh to be clene, body and goost.
Of myn estaat I nyl nat make no boost,
For wel ye knowe, a lord in his houshold,
He nath nat every vessel al of gold;
Somme been of tree, and doon hir lord servyse.
God clepeth folk to hym in sondry wyse,
And everich hath of God a propre yifte,
Som this, som that, as hym liketh shifte.
Virginitee is greet perfeccioun,
And continence eek with devocioun.
But Crist, that of perfeccioun is welle,
Bad nat every wight he sholde go selle
Al that he hadde, and gyve it to the poore,
And in swich wise folwe hym and his foore.
He spak to hem that wolde lyve parfitly,
And lordynges, by youre leve, that am nat I.
I wol bistowe the flour of myn age
In the actes and in fruyt of mariage.
An housbonde I wol have, I nyl nat lette,
Which shal be bothe my dettour and my thral,
And have his tribulacioun withal
Upon his flessh whil that I am his wyf.
I have the power durynge al my lyf
Upon his propre body, and noght he.
Right thus the Apostel tolde it unto me,
And bad oure housbondes for to love us weel.
Al this sentence me liketh every deel,—
  Up stirte the Pardoner, and that anon,
"Now, dame," quod he, "by God and by Seint John,
Ye been a noble prechour in this cas.
I was aboute to wedde a wyf, allas!
What sholde I bye it on my flessh so deere?
Yet hadde I levere wedde no wyf to-yeere!"

108 *he om.* 157 *that om.*

"Abyde," quod she, "my tale is nat bigonne.
Nay, thou shalt drynken of another tonne,
Er that I go, shal savoure wors than ale.
And whan that I have toold thee forth my tale
Of tribulacioun in mariage,
Of which I am expert in al myn age,
(This to seyn, myself have been the whippe),
Than maystow chese wheither thou wolt sippe
Of thilke tonne that I shal abroche.
Be war of it, er thou to ny approche,
For I shal telle ensamples mo than ten.
Whoso that nyl be war by othere men,
By hym shul othere men corrected be.
The same wordes writeth Ptholomee;
Rede it in his Almageste, and take it there."
"Dame, I wolde praye yow, if youre wyl it were,"
Seyde this Pardoner, "as ye bigan,
Telle forth youre tale, spareth for no man,
And teche us yonge men of your praktike."
"Gladly," quod she, "sith it may yow like.
But yet I praye to al this compaignye,
If that I speke after my fantasye,
As taketh not agrief of that I seye,
For myn entente nis but for to pleye."
—Now sire, now wol I telle forth my tale,
As evere moote I drynken wyn or ale,
I shal seye sooth, tho housbondes that I hadde,
As thre of hem were goode, and two were badde.
The thre men were goode, and riche, and olde;
Unnethe myghte they the statut holde
In which that they were bounden unto me—
Ye woot wel what I meene of this, pardee!
As help me God, I laughe whan I thynke
How pitously anyght I made hem swynke.

172 *thee om.* 173 that is in. 177 that. 180 *nyl* wol nat. 182 Protholomee. 184 *yow om.* 188 *quod she* sires. 191 *of om.* 192 *nis* is. 195 of tho.

And by my fey, I tolde of it no stoor,
They had me yeven hir gold and hir tresoor;
Me neded nat do lenger diligence
To wynne hir love, or doon hem reverence,
They loved me so wel, by God above,
That I ne tolde no deyntee of hir love.
A wys womman wol sette hire evere in oon
To gete hire love, ther as she hath noon.
But sith I hadde hem hoolly in myn hond,
And sith they hadde me yeven all hir lond,
What sholde I taken heede hem for to plese,
But it were for my profit and myn ese?
I sette hem so a-werke, by my fey,
That many a nyght they songen weilawey.
The bacoun was nat fet for hem, I trowe,
That som men han in Essex at Dunmowe.
I governed hem so wel after my lawe,
That ech of hem ful blisful was, and fawe
To brynge me gaye thynges fro the fayre.
They were ful glad whan I spak to hem faire,
For God it woot, I chidde hem spitously.
Now herkneth hou I baar me proprely,
Ye wise wyves, that kan understonde.
Thus shul ye speke and bere hem wrong on honde;
For half so boldely kan ther no man
Swere and lyen, as a womman kan.
I sey nat this by wyves that been wyse,
But if it be whan they hem mysavyse.
A wys wyf, if that she kan hir good,
Shal beren hym on hond the cow is wood,
And take witnesse of hir owene mayde,
Of hir assent; but herkneth how I sayde.
"Sir olde kaynard, is this thyn array?
Why is my neighebores wyf so gay?

215 werk. 220 hem was. 226 beren; *wrong om.* 228 kan a womman. 232 bere.

She is honoured overal ther she gooth;
I sitte at hoom, I have no thrifty clooth.
What dostow at my neighebores hous?
Is she so fair? artow so amorous?
What rowne ye with oure mayde? benedicite,
Sir olde lecchour, lat thy japes be!
And if I have a gossib or a freend
Withouten gilt, thou chidest as a feend
If that I walke or pleye unto his hous.
Thou comest hoom as dronken as a mous
And prechest on thy bench, with yvel preef!
Thou seist to me, it is a greet meschief
To wedde a povre womman, for costage,
And if she be riche and of heigh parage,
Thanne seistow it is a tormentrie
To soffren hir pride and hir malencolie.
And if she be fair, thou verray knave,
Thou seyst that every holour wol hir have;
She may no while in chastitee abyde
That is assailled upon ech a syde.
Thou seyst, som folk desiren us for richesse,
Somme for oure shape, and somme for oure fairnesse,
And som for she kan outher synge or daunce,
And som for gentillesse and daliaunce,
Som for hir handes and hir armes smale;
Thus goth al to the devel by thy tale.
Thou seyst, men may nat kepe a castel wal,
It may so longe assailled been overal.
And if that she be foul, thou seist that she
Coveiteth every man that she may se;
For as a spaynel she wol on hym lepe
Til that she fynde som man hir to chepe;
Ne noon so grey goos gooth ther in the lake
As, seistow, wol been withoute make;

257 that som. 258 *and om.* 259 kan synge and. 260 som for daliaunce. 269 *ther om.*

And seyst, it is an hard thyng for to welde
A thyng that no man wole, his thankes, helde.
Thus seistow, lorel, whan thow goost to bedde,
And that no wys man nedeth for to wedde,
Ne no man that entendeth unto hevene—
With wilde thonderdynt and firy levene
Moote thy welked nekke be to-broke!
Thow seyst that droppyng houses, and eek smoke,
And chidyng wyves maken men to flee
Out of hir owene hous, a benedicitee!
What eyleth swich an old man for to chide?
  Thow seyst, we wyves wol oure vices hide
Til we be fast, and thanne we wol hem shewe.
Wel may that be a proverbe of a shrewe!
Thou seist, that oxen, asses, hors, and houndes,
They been assayd at diverse stoundes;
Bacyns, lavours, er that men hem bye,
Spoones and stooles, and al swich housbondrye,
And so been pottes, clothes, and array;
But folk of wyves maken noon assay
Til they be wedded, olde dotard shrewe!
Thanne, seistow, we wol oure vices shewe.
Thou seist also, that it displeseth me
But if that thou wolt preyse my beautee,
And but thou poure alwey upon my face,
And clepe me 'faire dame' in every place,
And but thou make a feeste on thilke day
That I was born, and make me fressh and gay,
And but thou do to my norice honour,
And to my chamberere withinne my bour,
And to my fadres folk and hise allyes—
Thus seistow, olde barel ful of lyes!
And yet of oure apprentice Janekyn,
For his crisp heer, shynynge as gold so fyn,
And for he squiereth me bothe up and doun,

280 houses. 282 that we. 300 chambrere.

Yet hastow caught a fals suspecioun.
I wol hym noght, thogh thou were deed tomorwe.
But tel me this, why hydestow, with sorwe,
The keyes of my cheste awey fro me?
It is my good as wel as thyn, pardee;
What wenestow make an ydiot of oure dame?
Now, by that lord that called is seint Jame,
Thou shalt nat bothe, thogh that thou were wood,
Be maister of my body and of my good;
That oon thou shalt forgo, maugree thyne eyen.
What nedeth thee of me to enquere or spyen?
I trowe thou woldest loke me in thy chiste.
Thou sholdest seye, 'Wyf, go wher thee liste,
Taak youre disport, I wol not leve no talys,
I knowe yow for a trewe wyf, dame Alys.'
We love no man that taketh kepe or charge
Wher that we goon, we wol ben at our large.
Of alle men yblessed moot he be,
The wise astrologien, Daun Ptholome,
That seith this proverbe in his Almageste.
'Of alle men his wysdom is the hyeste,
That rekketh nevere who hath the world in honde.'
By this proverbe thou shalt understonde,
Have thou ynogh, what thar thee recche or care
How myrily that othere folkes fare?
He is to greet a nygard, that wolde werne
A man to lighte his candle at his lanterne;
He shal have never the lasse light, pardee,
Have thou ynogh, thee thar nat pleyne thee.
Thou seyst also, that if we make us gay
With clothyng and with precious array,
That it is peril of oure chastitee;
And yet, with sorwe, thou most enforce thee,
And seye thise wordes in the apostles name,
'In habit, maad with chastitee and shame,

308 *this om.* 311 to make. 319 *not om.* 323 blessed.

Ye wommen shul apparaille yow,' quod he,
'And noght in tressed heer and gay perree,
As perles, ne with gold, ne clothes riche.'
After thy text, ne after thy rubriche
I wol nat wirche, as muchel as a gnat!
Thou seydest this, that I was lyk a cat;
For whoso wolde senge a cattes skyn,
Thanne wolde the cat wel dwellen in his in.
And if the cattes skyn be slyk and gay,
She wol nat dwelle in house half a day,
But forth she wole, er any day be dawed,
To shewe hir skyn, and goon a caterwawed.
This is to seye, if I be gay, sire shrewe,
I wol renne out, my borel for to shewe.
Sire olde fool, what eyleth thee to spyen,
Thogh thou preye Argus, with hise hundred eyen,
To be my wardecors, as he kan best,
In feith he shal nat kepe me but me lest;
Yet koude I make his berd, so moot I thee.
Thou seydest eek, that ther been thynges thre,
The whiche thynges troublen al this erthe,
And that no wight ne may endure the ferthe.
O leeve sire shrewe, Jesu shorte thy lyf!
Yet prechestow, and seyst, an hateful wyf
Yrekened is for oon of thise meschances.
Been ther none othere maner resemblances
That ye may likne youre parables to,
But if a sely wyf be oon of tho?
Thou likenest wommenes love to helle,
To bareyne lond, ther water may nat dwelle.
Thou liknest it also to wilde fyr;
The moore it brenneth, the moore it hath desir
To consume every thyng that brent wole be.
Thou seyst, right as wormes shendeth a tree,

360 *me* (2) *om.* 364 *ne om.* 366 *an* and. 368 *maner om.* 371 liknest. 375 consumen.

Right so a wyf destroyeth hir housbond.
This knowe they, that been to wyves bonde."
Lordynges, right thus, as ye have understonde,
Baar I stifly myne olde housbondes on honde,
That thus they seyden in hir dronkenesse,
And al was fals, but that I took witnesse
On Janekyn and on my nece also.
O lord, the pyne I dide hem, and the wo
Ful giltelees, by Goddes sweete pyne!
For as an hors I koude byte and whyne,
I koude pleyne, thogh I were in the gilt,
Or elles often tyme hadde I been spilt.
Who so that first to mille comth first grynt;
I pleyned first, so was oure werre ystynt.
They were ful glad to excuse hem ful blyve
Of thyng of which they nevere agilte hir lyve.
Of wenches wolde I beren hym on honde,
Whan that for syk unnethes myghte he stonde,
Yet tikled it his herte, for that he
Wende that I hadde of hym so greet chiertee.
I swoor that al my walkynge out by nyghte
Was for tespye wenches that he dighte.
Under that colour hadde I many a myrthe;
For al swich thyng was yeven us in oure byrthe,
Deceite, wepyng, spynnyng, God hath yeve
To wommen kyndely whil they may lyve.
And thus of o thyng I avaunte me,
Atte ende I hadde the bettre in ech degree,
By sleighte, or force, or by som maner thyng,
As by continueel murmure or grucchyng.
Namely abedde hadden they meschaunce;
Ther wolde I chide and do hem no plesaunce,
I wolde no lenger in the bed abyde,
If that I felte his arm over my syde
Til he had maad his raunsoun unto me;

385 giltlees. 389 who comth first to Mille. 391 *ful om.* 402 that they.

Thanne wolde I suffre hym do his nycetee.
And therfore every man this tale I telle,
Wynne who so may, for al is for to selle.
With empty hand men may none haukes lure,—
For wynnyng wolde I al his lust endure
And make me a feyned appetit;
And yet in bacoun hadde I nevere delit;
That made me that evere I wolde hem chide.
For thogh the pope hadde seten hem biside,
I wolde nat spare hem at hir owene bord,
For by my trouthe I quitte hem word for word.
As help me verray God omnipotent,
Though I right now sholde make my testament,
I ne owe hem nat a word, that it nys quit.
I broghte it so aboute by my wit,
That they moste yeve it up as for the beste,
Or elles hadde we nevere been in reste.
For thogh he looked as a wood leoun,
Yet sholde he faille of his conclusioun.
Thanne wolde I seye, "Goode lief, taak keepe,
How mekely looketh Wilkyn oure sheepe!
Com neer, my spouse, lat me ba thy cheke,
Ye sholde been al pacient and meke,
And han a sweete spiced conscience,
Sith ye so preche of Jobes pacience.
Suffreth alwey, syn ye so wel kan preche,
And but ye do, certein we shal yow teche
That it is fair to have a wyf in pees.
Oon of us two moste bowen, doutelees,
And sith a man is moore resonable,
Than womman is, ye moste been suffrable."
Swiche maner wordes hadde we on honde.
Now wol I speken of my fourthe housbonde.
  My fourthe housbonde was a revelour,
This is to seyn, he hadde a paramour,
And I was yong and ful of ragerye,

Stibourne and strong, and joly as a pye.
Wel koude I daunce to an harpe smale,
And synge, ywis, as any nyghtyngale,
Whan I had dronke a draughte of sweete wyn.
Metellius, the foule cherl, the swyn,
That with a staf birafte his wyf hire lyf,
For she drank wyn, thogh I hadde been his wyf,
He sholde nat han daunted me fro drynke.
And after wyn on Venus moste I thynke,
For al so siker as cold engendreth hayl,
A likerous mouth moste han a likerous tayl.
In wommen vinolent is no defence,
This knowen lecchours by experience.
But, Lord Crist! whan that it remembreth me
Upon my yowthe and on my jolitee,
It tikleth me aboute myn herte-roote.
Unto this day it dooth myn herte boote
That I have had my world, as in my tyme.
But age, allas, that al wole envenyme,
Hath me biraft my beautee and my pith!
Lat go, fare-wel, the devel go therwith!
The flour is goon, ther is namoore to telle,
The bren as I best kan, now moste I selle;
But yet to be right myrie wol I fonde.
Now wol I tellen of my fourthe housbonde.
I seye, I hadde in herte greet despit
That he of any oother had delit;
But he was quit, by God and by Seint Joce!
I made hym of the same wode a croce;
Nat of my body in no foul manere,
But certeinly, I made folk swich cheere
That in his owene grece I made hym frye
For angre and for verray jalousye.
By God, in erthe I was his purgatorie,
For which I hope his soule be in glorie,

486 certein.

For God it woot, he sat ful ofte and song
Whan that his shoo ful bitterly hym wrong!
Ther was no wight save God and he, that wiste
In many wise how soore I hym twiste.
He deyde whan I cam fro Jerusalem,
And lith ygrave under the roode-beem,
Al is his tombe noght so curyus
As was the sepulcre of hym Daryus,
Which that Appelles wroghte subtilly.
It nys but wast to burye hym preciously,
Lat hym fare-wel, God yeve his soule reste,
He is now in his grave, and in his cheste.
Now of my fifthe housbonde wol I telle.
God lete his soule nevere come in helle!
And yet was he to me the mooste shrewe;
That feele I on my ribbes al by rewe,
And evere shal, unto myn endyng day.
But in oure bed he was ful fressh and gay,
And therwithal so wel koude he me glose
Whan that he wolde han my bele chose,
That thogh he hadde me bet on every bon
He koude wynne agayn my love anon.
I trowe I loved hym beste, for that he
Was of his love daungerous to me.
We wommen han, if that I shal nat lye,
In this matere a queynte fantasye;
Wayte what thyng we may nat lightly have,
Ther-after wol we crie al day and crave.
Forbede us thyng, and that desiren we;
Preesse on us faste, and thanne wol we fle;
With daunger oute we al oure chaffare.
Greet prees at market maketh deere ware,
And to greet cheep is holde at litel prys;
This knoweth every womman that is wys.
My fifthe housbonde, God his soule blesse,

513 best.

Which that I took for love and no richesse,
He somtyme was a clerk of Oxenford,
And hadde left scole, and wente at hom to bord
With my gossib, dwellynge in oure toun,
God have hir soule! hir name was Alisoun.
She knew myn herte and eek my privetee
Bet than oure parisshe preest, as moot I thee.
To hir biwreyed I my conseil al,
For hadde myn housbonde pissed on a wal,
Or doon a thyng that sholde han cost his lyf,
To hir, and to another worthy wyf,
And to my nece, which that I loved weel,
I wolde han toold his conseil every deel.
And so I dide ful often, God it woot!
That made his face ful often reed and hoot
For verray shame, and blamed hym self, for he
Had toold to me so greet a pryvetee.
And so bifel that ones, in a Lente—
So often tymes I to my gossyb wente,
For evere yet I loved to be gay,
And for to walke in March, Averill, and May,
Fro hous to hous to heere sondry talys—
That Jankyn Clerk and my gossyb, dame Alys,
And I myself into the feeldes wente.
Myn housbonde was at London al that Lente;
I hadde the bettre leyser for to pleye,
And for to se, and eek for to be seye
Of lusty folk; what wiste I, wher my grace
Was shapen for to be, or in what place?
Therfore I made my visitaciouns
To vigilies and to processiouns,
To prechyng eek, and to thise pilgrimages,
To pleyes of myracles, and to mariages;
And wered upon my gaye scarlet gytes.
Thise wormes ne thise motthes, ne thise mytes,

550 *that* the.

Upon my peril, frete hem never a deel—
And wostow why? for they were used weel!
  Now wol I tellen forth what happed me.
I seye, that in the feeldes walked we,
Til trewely we hadde swich daliance,
This clerk and I, that of my purveiance
I spak to hym, and seyde hym, how that he,
If I were wydwe, sholde wedde me.
For certeinly, I sey for no bobance,
Yet was I nevere withouten purveiance
Of mariage, nof othere thynges eek.
I holde a mouses herte nat worth a leek
That hath but oon hole for to sterte to,
And if that faille, thanne is al ydo.
I bar hym on honde, he hadde enchanted me—
My dame taughte me that soutiltee.
And eek I seyde, I mette of hym al nyght,
He wolde han slayn me as I lay upright,
And al my bed was ful of verray blood;
But yet I hope that he shal do me good,
For blood bitokeneth gold, as me was taught—
And al was fals, I dremed of it right naught,
But as I folwed ay my dames loore
As wel of this, as of othere thynges moore.
  But now sir, lat me se, what I shal seyn?
A ha, by God! I have my tale ageyn.
  Whan that my fourthe housbonde was on beere,
I weep algate, and made sory cheere,
As wyves mooten—for it is usage—
And with my coverchief covered my visage;
But for that I was purveyed of a make,
I wepte but smal, and that I undertake.
To chirche was myn housbonde born amorwe
With neighebores that for hym maden sorwe;
And Janekyn oure clerk was oon of tho.

583 *as om.* 595 Jankyn.

As help me God, whan that I saugh hym go
After the beere, me thoughte he hadde a paire
Of legges and of feet so clene and faire,
That al myn herte I yaf unto his hoold.
He was, I trowe, a twenty wynter oold,
And I was fourty, if I shal seye sooth,
But yet I hadde alwey a coltes tooth.
Gat-tothed I was, and that bicam me weel,
I hadde the prente of Seinte Venus seel.
As help me God, I was a lusty oon,
And faire, and riche, and yong, and wel bigon,
And trewely, as myne housbondes tolde me,
I hadde the beste quonyam myghte be.
For certes, I am al Venerien
In feelynge, and myn herte is Marcien.
Venus me yaf my lust, my likerousnesse,
And Mars yaf me my sturdy hardynesse.
Myn ascendent was Taur, and Mars therinne,
Allas, allas, that evere love was synne!
I folwed ay myn inclinacioun
By vertu of my constellacioun;
That made me I koude noght withdrawe
My chambre of Venus from a good felawe.
Yet have I Martes mark upon my face,
And also in another privee place.
For God so wys be my savacioun,
I ne loved nevere by no discrecioun,
But evere folwede myn appetit,
Al were he short, or long, or blak, or whit.
I took no kepe, so that he liked me,
How poore he was, ne eek of what degree.
What sholde I seye, but at the monthes ende
This joly clerk Jankyn, that was so hende,
Hath wedded me with greet solempnytee,
And to hym yaf I al the lond and fee

604 seint. 623 folwed.

That evere was me yeven therbifoore;
But afterward repented me ful soore,
He nolde suffre nothyng of my list.
By God, he smoot me ones on the lyst
For that I rente out of his book a leef,
That of the strook myn ere wax al deef.
Stibourne I was as is a leonesse,
And of my tonge a verray jangleresse,
And walke I wolde, as I had doon biforn,
From hous to hous, although he had it sworn,
For which he often-tymes wolde preche,
And me of olde Romayn geestes teche,
How he Symplicius Gallus lefte his wyf,
And hir forsook for terme of al his lyf,
Noght but for open-heveded he hir say,
Lookynge out at his dore, upon a day.
Another Romayn tolde he me by name,
That for his wyf was at a someres game
Withoute his wityng, he forsook hir eke.
And thanne wolde he upon his Bible seke
That ilke proverbe of Ecclesiaste,
Where he comandeth, and forbedeth faste,
Man shal nat suffre his wyf go roule aboute,
Thanne wolde he seye right thus, withouten doute:
"Who so that buyldeth his hous al of salwes,
And priketh his blynde hors over the falwes,
And suffreth his wyf to go seken halwes,
Is worthy to been hanged on the galwes!"
But al for noght, I sette noght an hawe
Of his proverbes, nof his olde lawe,
Ne I wolde nat of hym corrected be.
I hate hym that my vices telleth me;
And so doo mo, God woot, of us than I!
This made hym with me wood al outrely,
I nolde noght forbere hym in no cas.

649 with outen. 660 awe.

Now wol I seye yow sooth, by seint Thomas,
Why that I rente out of his book a leef,
For which he smoot me so that I was deef.
He hadde a book that gladly, nyght and day,
For his desport he wolde rede alway.
He cleped it 'Valerie and Theofraste,'
At whiche book he lough alwey ful faste.
And eek ther was som tyme a clerk at Rome,
A cardinal that highte Seint Jerome,
That made a book agayn Jovinian,
In whiche book eek ther was Tertulan,
Crisippus, Trotula, and Helowys,
That was abbesse nat fer fro Parys,
And eek the Parables of Salomon,
Ovides Art, and bookes many on,
And alle thise were bounden in o volume,
And every nyght and day was his custume
Whan he hadde leyser and vacacioun
From oother worldly occupacioun
To reden on this book of wikked wyves.
He knew of hem mo legendes and lyves
Than been of goode wyves in the Bible.
For trusteth wel, it is an inpossible
That any clerk wol speke good of wyves,
But if it be of hooly seintes lyves,
Ne noon oother womman never the mo.
Who peyntede the leoun, tel me, who?
By God, if wommen hadde writen stories,
As clerkes han withinne hire oratories,
They wolde han writen of men moore wikkednesse
Than all the mark of Adam may redresse.
The children of Mercurie and Venus
Been in hir wirkyng ful contrarius,
Mercurie loveth wysdam and science,
And Venus loveth ryot and dispence.

672, 676 which. 692 peynted.

And for hire diverse disposicioun
Ech falleth in otheres exaltacioun,
And thus, God woot, Mercurie is desolat
In Pisces, wher Venus is exaltat;
And Venus falleth ther Mercurie is reysed.
Therfore no womman of no clerk is preysed.
The clerk, whan he is oold and may noght do
Of Venus werkes worth his olde sho,
Thanne sit he doun, and writ in his dotage
That wommen kan nat kepe hir mariage.
But now to purpos, why I tolde thee
That I was beten for a book, pardee.
Upon a nyght Jankyn, that was oure sire,
Redde on his book as he sat by the fire
Of Eva first, that for hir wikkednesse
Was al mankynde broght to wrecchednesse,
For which that Jesu Crist hymself was slayn,
That boghte us with his herte-blood agayn.
Lo, heere expres of womman may ye fynde,
That womman was the los of al mankynde.
Tho redde he me how Sampson loste hise heres,
Slepynge, his lemman kitte it with hir sheres,
Thurgh whiche tresoun loste he bothe hise eyen.
Tho redde he me, if that I shal nat lyen,
Of Hercules and of his Dianyre,
That caused hym to sette hymself afyre.
No thyng forgat he the penaunce and wo
That Socrates hadde with hise wyves two,
How Xantippa caste pisse up-on his heed.
This sely man sat stille as he were deed;
He wiped his heed, namoore dorste he seyn
But, "er that thonder stynte, comth a reyn."
Of Phasifpha, that was the queene of Crete,
For shrewednesse hym thoughte the tale swete—
Fy, speke namoore! it is a grisly thyng

717 *that Jesu om.* 723 which. 727 *penaunce* sorwe.

Of hir horrible lust and hir likyng.
Of Clitermystra for hire lecherye,
That falsly made hir housbonde for to dye,
He redde it with ful good devocioun.
He tolde me eek for what occasioun
Amphiorax at Thebes loste his lyf.
Myn housbonde hadde a legende of his wyf
Eriphilem, that for an ouche of gold
Hath prively unto the Grekes told
Wher that hir housbonde hidde hym in a place,
For which he hadde at Thebes sory grace.
Of Lyma tolde he me, and of Lucye,
They bothe made hir housbondes for to dye,
That oon for love, that oother was for hate.
Lyma hir housbonde, on an even late,
Empoysoned hath, for that she was his fo.
Lucia likerous loved hir housbonde so,
That for he sholde alwey upon hire thynke,
She yaf hym swich a manere love-drynke
That he was deed, er it were by the morwe.
And thus algates housbondes han sorw.
Thanne tolde he me, how that Latumyus
Compleyned unto his felawe Arrius,
That in his gardyn growed swich a tree,
On which he seyde how that hise wyves thre
Hanged hemself, for herte despitus.
"O leeve brother," quod this Arrius,
"Yif me a plante of thilke blissed tree,
And in my gardyn planted it shal bee."
Of latter date of wyves hath he red,
That somme han slayn hir housbondes in hir bed,
And lete hir lecchour dighte hir al the nyght,
Whan that the corps lay in the floor upright.
And somme han dryve nayles in hir brayn
Whil that they slepte, and thus they han hem slayn.

750 upon. 757 that oon.

Somme han hem yeve poysoun in hir drynke.
He spak moore harm than herte may bithynke,
And therwithal he knew of mo proverbes
Than in this world ther growen gras or herbes.
"Bet is," quod he, "thyn habitacioun
Be with a leoun, or a foul dragoun,
Than with a womman usynge for to chyde."
"Bet is," quod he, "hye in the roof abyde
Than with an angry wyf doun in the hous,
They been so wikked and contrarious.
They haten that hir housbondes loveth ay."
He seyde, "a womman cast hir shame away
Whan she cast of hir smok," and forther mo,
"A fair womman, but she be chaast also,
Is lyk a goldryng in a sowes nose."
Who wolde leeve, or who wolde suppose
The wo that in myn herte was, and pyne?
And whan I saugh he wolde nevere fyne
To reden on this cursed book al nyght,
Al sodeynly thre leves have I plyght
Out of his book, right as he radde, and eke
I with my fest so took hym on the cheke,
That in oure fyr he fil bakward adoun.
And he up-stirte as dooth a wood leoun,
And with his fest he smoot me on the heed
That in the floor I lay, as I were deed.
And whan he saugh how stille that I lay,
He was agast, and wolde han fled his way,
Til atte laste out of my swogh I breyde.
"O, hastow slayn me, false theef," I seyde,
"And for my land thus hastow mordred me?
Er I be deed, yet wol I kisse thee."
And neer he cam and kneled faire adoun,
And seyde, "deere suster Alisoun,
As help me God, I shal thee nevere smyte.
That I have doon, it is thyself to wyte,

Foryeve it me, and that I thee biseke."
And yet eftsoones I hitte hym on the cheke,
And seyde, "theef, thus muchel am I wreke;
Now wol I dye, I may no lenger speke."
But atte laste, with muchel care and wo,
We fille acorded by us selven two.
He yaf me al the bridel in myn hond,
To han the governance of hous and lond,
And of his tonge, and of his hond also,
And made hym brenne his book anon right tho.
And whan that I hadde geten unto me
By maistrie, al the soveraynetee,
And that he seyde, "myn owene trewe wyf,
Do as thee lust the terme of al thy lyf,
Keepe thyn honour, and keep eek myn estaat,"
After that day we hadden never debaat.
God help me so, I was to hym as kynde
As any wyf from Denmark unto Ynde,
And also trewe, and so was he to me.
I prey to God, that sit in magestee,
So blesse his soule for his mercy deere.
Now wol I seye my tale, if ye wol heere.

Biholde the wordes bitwene the Somonour and the Frere.

The Frere lough whan he hadde herd al this.—
"Now dame," quod he, "so have I joye or blis,
This is a long preamble of a tale."
And whan the Somonour herde the Frere gale,
"Lo," quod the Somonour, "Goddes armes two,
A frere wol entremette hym evere-mo.
Lo goode men, a flye and eek a frere
Wol falle in every dyssh and eek mateere.
What spekestow of preambulacioun?
What, amble, or trotte, or pees, or go sit doun,

815 *of* (2) *om.* 820 *the* to.

Thou lettest oure disport in this manere."
"Ye, woltow so, sire Somonour?" quod the frere,
"Now by my feith, I shal er that I go
Telle of a Somonour swich a tale or two
That alle the folk shal laughen in this place."
"Now elles, frere, I bishrewe thy face,"
Quod this Somonour, "and I bishrewe me,
But if I telle tales two or thre
Of freres, er I come to Sidyngborne,
That I shal make thyn herte for to morne,
For wel I woot thy pacience is gon."
Oure Hooste cride, "Pees, and that anon!"
And seyde, "lat the womman telle hire tale,
Ye fare as folk that dronken were of ale.
Do, dame, telle forth youre tale, and that is best."
"Al redy, sire," quod she, "right as yow lest,
If I have licence of this worthy frere."
"Yis, dame," quod he, "tel forth, and I wol heere."

Heere endeth the Wyf of Bathe hir Prologe.

THE TALE OF THE WYF OF BATH

Here bigynneth the Tale of the Wyf of Bathe.

In tholde dayes of the Kyng Arthour,
Of which that Britons speken greet honour,
All was this land fulfild of Fayerye.
The elf-queene, with hir joly compaignye,
Daunced ful ofte in many a grene mede;
This was the olde opinion, as I rede.
I speke of manye hundred yeres ago;
But now kan no man se none elves mo,
For now the grete charitee and prayeres
Of lymytours, and othere hooly freres,
That serchen every lond and every streem
As thikke as motes in the sonne-beem,
Blessynge halles, chambres, kichenes, boures,
Citees, burghes, castels, hye toures,
Thropes, bernes, shipnes, dayeryes,
This maketh that ther been no Fayeryes.
For ther as wont to walken was an elf,
Ther walketh now the lymytour hymself
In undermeles and in morwenynges,
And seyth his matyns and his hooly thynges
As he gooth in his lymytacioun.
Wommen may go saufly up and doun;
In every bussh or under every tree
Ther is noon oother incubus but he,
And he ne wol doon hem but dishonour.
And so bifel it that this kyng Arthour
Hadde in his hous a lusty bacheler,
That on a day cam ridynge fro ryver;
And happed that, allone as she was born,

857 *the om.* 859 ffairye. 882 *it om.* 872 ffairyes. 883 *his om.* 885 *she* he.

He saugh a mayde walkynge hym biforn,
Of whiche mayde anon, maugree hir heed,
By verray force he rafte hir maydenhed;
For which oppressioun was swich clamour
And swich pursute unto the kyng Arthour,
That dampned was this knyght for to be deed
By cours of lawe, and sholde han lost his heed,
Paraventure, swich was the statut tho,
But that the queene and othere ladyes mo
So longe preyeden the kyng of grace,
Til he his lyf hym graunted in the place,
And yaf hym to the queene al at hir wille,
To chese, wheither she wolde hym save or spille.
The queene thanketh the kyng with al hir myght,
And after this thus spak she to the knyght,
Whan that she saugh hir tyme, upon a day,
"Thou standest yet," quod she, "in swich array
That of thy lyf yet hastow no suretee.
I grante thee lyf, if thou kanst tellen me
What thyng is it that wommen moost desiren.
Be war and keep thy nekke-boon from iren,
And if thou kanst nat tellen it anon,
Yet shal I yeve thee leve for to gon
A twelf-month and a day to seche and leere
An answere suffisant in this mateere;
And suretee wol I han, er that thou pace,
Thy body for to yelden in this place."
Wo was this knyght, and sorwefully he siketh,
But what! he may nat do al as hym liketh;
And at the laste he chees hym for to wende,
And come agayn right at the yeres ende,
With swich answere as God wolde hym purveye;
And taketh his leve, and wendeth forth his weye.
He seketh every hous and every place,
Where as he hopeth for to fynde grace

887 which. 888 *he om.*; birafte. 895 preyden. 914 *what om.*

To lerne what thyng wommen loven moost;
But he ne koude arryven in no coost
Wher as he myghte fynde in this mateere
Two creatures accordynge in feere.
Somme seyde, wommen loven best richesse,
Somme seyde honour, somme seyde jolynesse,
Somme riche array, somme seyden lust abedde,
And oftetyme to be wydwe and wedde.
Somme seyde, that oure hertes been moost esed
Whan that we been yflatered and yplesed—
He gooth ful ny the sothe, I wol nat lye,
A man shal wynne us best with flaterye;
And with attendance and with bisynesse
Been we ylymed, bothe moore and lesse.—
And somme seyn, how that we loven best
For to be free, and do right as us lest,
And that no man repreve us of oure vice,
But seye that we be wise, and nothyng nyce.
For trewely, ther is noon of us alle,
If any wight wol clawe us on the galle,
That we nel kike; for he seith us sooth;
Assay, and he shal fynde it that so dooth.
For be we never so vicious withinne,
We wol been holden wise, and clene of synne.
And somme seyn, that greet delit han we
For to been holden stable and eke secree,
And in o purpos stedefastly to dwelle,
And nat biwreye thyng that men us telle.
But that tale is nat worth a rake-stele,
Pardee, we wommen konne no thyng hele.
Witnesse on Myda—wol ye heere the tale?
Ovyde, amonges othere thynges smale,
Seyde, Myda hadde under his longe heres
Growynge upon his heed two asses eres,
The whiche vice he hydde, as he best myghte,

935 *how om.* 955 which.

Ful subtilly from every mannes sighte;
That, save his wyf, ther wiste of it namo,
He loved hir moost and trusted hir also.
He preyede hir, that to no creature
She sholde tellen of his disfigure.
She swoor him nay, for al this world to wynne,
She nolde do that vileynye or synne,
To make hir housbonde han so foul a name,
She nolde nat telle it for hir owene shame!
But nathelees, hir thoughte that she dyde,
That she so longe sholde a conseil hyde,
Hir thoughte it swal so soore aboute hir herte
That nedely som word hir moste asterte.
And sith she dorste telle it to no man,
Doun to a mareys faste by she ran,
Til she came there, hir herte was afyre,
And as a bitore bombleth in the myre,
She leyde hir mouth unto the water doun;—
"Biwreye me nat, thou water, with thy soun,"
Quod she, "to thee I telle it and namo,
Myn housbonde hath longe asses erys two!
Now is myn herte al hool, now is it oute,
I myghte no lenger kepe it, out of doute."
Heere may ye se, thogh we a tyme abyde,
Yet out it moot, we kan no conseil hyde.—
The remenant of the tale, if ye wol heere,
Redeth Ovyde, and ther ye may it leere.—
This knyght, of which my tale is specially,
Whan that he saugh he myghte nat come therby,
This is to seye, what wommen love moost,
Withinne his brest ful sorweful was the goost.
But hoom he gooth, he myghte nat sojourne;
The day was come that homward moste he tourne,
And in his wey it happed hym to ryde
In al this care under a forest syde,

958 truste. 959 preyde.

Wher as he saugh upon a daunce go
Of ladyes foure and twenty, and yet mo;
Toward the whiche daunce he drow ful yerne,
In hope that som wysdom sholde he lerne.
But certeinly, er he came fully there,
Vanysshed was this daunce, he nyste where,
No creature saugh he that bar lyf,
Save on the grene he saugh sittynge a wyf,
A fouler wight ther may no man devyse.
Agayn the knyght this olde wyf gan ryse,
And seyde, "Sire knyght, heer-forth ne lith no wey;
Tel me what that ye seken, by your fey.
Paraventure it may the bettre be,
Thise olde folk kan muchel thyng," quod she.
"My leeve mooder," quod this knyght, "certeyn,
I nam but deed, but if that I kan seyn
What thyng it is, that wommen moost desire.
Koude ye me wisse, I wolde wel quite youre hire."
"Plight me thy trouthe, heere in myn hand," quod she,
"The nexte thyng that I requere thee,
Thou shalt it do, if it lye in thy myght,
And I wol telle it yow, er it be nyght."
"Have heer my trouthe," quod the knyght, "I grante."
"Thanne," quod she, "I dar me wel avante,
Thy lyf is sauf, for I wol stonde therby
Upon my lyf, the queene wol seye as I.
Lat se which is the proudeste of hem alle,
That wereth on a coverchief or a calle,
That dar seye nay of that I shal thee teche.
Lat us go forth withouten lenger speche."
Tho rowned she a pistel in his ere,
And bad hym to be glad and have no fere.
Whan they be comen to the court, this knyght
Seyde he had holde his day, as he hadde hight,
And redy was his answere, as he sayde.

993 which.

Ful many a noble wyf, and many a mayde,
And many a wydwe, for that they been wise,
The queene hirself sittynge as a justise,
Assembled been, his answere for to heere;
And afterward this knyght was bode appeere.
To every wight comanded was silence,
And that the knyght sholde telle in audience
What thyng that worldly wommen loven best.
This knyght ne stood nat stille, as doth a best,
But to his questioun anon answerde
With manly voys, that al the court it herde:
"My lige lady, generally," quod he,
"Wommen desiren to have sovereynetee
As wel over hir housbond as hir love,
And for to been in maistrie hym above.
This is youre mooste desir, thogh ye me kille,
Dooth as yow list, I am heer at youre wille."
In al the court ne was ther wyf ne mayde
Ne wydwe that contraried that he sayde,
But seyden he was worthy han his lyf.
And with that word up stirte the olde wyf,
Which that the knyght saugh sittynge in the grene.
"Mercy," quod she, "my sovereyn lady queene,
Er that youre court departe, do me right.
I taughte this answere unto the knyght,
For which he plighte me his trouthe there,
The firste thyng I wolde of hym requere,
He wolde it do, if it lay in his myght.
Bifor the court thanne preye I thee, sir kynght,"
Quod she, "that thou me take unto thy wyf,
For wel thou woost that I have kept thy lyf.
If I seye fals, sey nay, upon thy fey!"
This knyght answerde, "Allas and weylawey!
I woot right wel that swich was my biheste!
For Goddes love, as chees a newe requeste,

1028 *a om.* 1038 *to om.* 1042 *heer om.* 1052 *of om.*

Taak al my good, and lat my body go!"
"Nay, thanne," quod she, "I shrewe us bothe two,
For thogh that I be foul, and oold, and poore,
I nolde for al the metal, ne for oore,
That under erthe is grave, or lith above,
But if thy wyf I were, and eek thy love."
"My love?" quod he, "nay, my dampnacioun!
Allas, that any of my nacioun
Sholde evere so foule disparaged be!"
But al for noght, the ende is this, that he
Constreyned was, he nedes moste hir wedde,
And taketh his olde wyf, and gooth to bedde.
Now wolden som men seye, paraventure,
That for my necligence I do no cure
To tellen yow the joye and al tharray,
That at the feeste was that ilke day;
To whiche thyng shortly answere I shal.
I seye, ther nas no joye ne feeste at al,
Ther nas but hevynesse and muche sorwe,
For prively he wedde hir on a morwe,
And al day after hidde hym as an owle,
So wo was hym, his wyf looked so foule.
Greet was the wo the knyght hadde in his thoght,
Whan he was with his wyf abedde ybroght,
He walweth and he turneth to and fro.
His olde wyf lay smylynge everemo,
And seyde, "O deere housbonde, benedicitee,
Fareth every knyght thus with his wyf, as ye?
Is this the lawe of Kyng Arthures hous?
Is every knyght of his so dangerous?
I am youre owene love, and eek your wyf;
I am she which that saved hath youre lyf.
And certes, yet dide I yow nevere unright;
Why fare ye thus with me this firste nyght?

1063 *and* (1) *om.* 1070 thende. 1077 which. 1080 wedded. 1091 *eek om.* 1093 ne dide.

Ye faren lyk a man had lost his wit.
What is my gilt? for Goddes love, tel it,
And it shal been amended, if I may."
"Amended," quod this knyght, "allas! nay! nay!
It wol nat been amended nevere mo;
Thou art so loothly and so oold also
And therto comen of so lough a kynde,
That litel wonder is thogh I walwe and wynde.
So wolde God, myn herte wolde breste!"
"Is this," quod she, "the cause of youre unreste?"
"Ye, certeinly," quod he, "no wonder is!"
"Now, sire," quod she, "I koude amende al this,
If that me liste, er it were dayes thre,
So wel ye myghte bere yow unto me.
But for ye speken of swich gentillesse
As is descended out of old richesse,
That therfore sholden ye be gentil men,
Swich arrogance nis nat worth an hen.
Looke who that is moost vertuous alway,
Pryvee and apert, and moost entendeth ay
To do the gentil dedes that he kan,
Taak hym for the grettest gentil-man.
Crist wole, we clayme of hym oure gentillesse,
Nat of oure eldres for hire old richesse.
For thogh they yeve us al hir heritage,
For which we clayme to been of heigh parage,
Yet may they nat biquethe for no thyng
To noon of us hir vertuous lyvyng,
That made hem gentil men ycalled be,
And bad us folwen hem in swich degree.
Wel kan the wise poete of Florence,
That highte Dant, speken in this sentence.
Lo in swich maner rym is Dantes tale:
'Ful selde upriseth by his branches smale
Prowesse of man, for God of his goodnesse

1112 is.

Wole, that of hym we clayme oure gentillesse.'
For of oure eldres may we no thyng clayme
But temporel thyng, that man may hurte and mayme.
Eek every wight woot this as wel as I,
If gentillesse were planted natureelly
Unto a certeyn lynage doun the lyne,
Pryvee nor apert, thanne wolde they nevere fyne
To doon of gentillesse the faire office,
They myghte do no vileynye or vice.
Taak fyr, and ber it in the derkeste hous
Bitwix this and the mount of Kaukasous,
And lat men shette the dores and go thenne,
Yet wole the fyr as faire lye and brenne
As twenty thousand men myghte it biholde;
His office natureel ay wol it holde,
Up peril of my lyf, til that it dye.

Heere may ye se wel, how that genterye
Is nat annexed to possessioun,
Sith folk ne doon hir operacioun
Alwey, as dooth the fyr, lo, in his kynde.
For God it woot, men may wel often fynde
A lordes sone do shame and vileynye,
And he that wole han pris of his gentrye,
For he was boren of a gentil hous,
And hadde hise eldres noble and vertuous,
And nel hym-selven do no gentil dedis,
Ne folwen his gentil auncestre that deed is,
He nys nat gentil, be he duc or erl;
For vileyns synful dedes make a cherl.
For gentillesse nys but renomee
Of thyne auncestres for hire heigh bountee,
Which is a strange thyng to thy persone.
Thy gentillesse cometh fro God allone,
Thanne comth oure verray gentillesse of grace,
It was no thyng biquethe us with oure place.

1153 born.

Thenketh hou noble, as seith Valerius,
Was thilke Tullius Hostillius,
That out of poverte roos to heigh noblesse.
Reedeth Senek, and redeth eek Boece,
Ther shul ye seen expres that it no drede is,
That he is gentil that dooth gentil dedis.
And therfore, leeve housbonde, I thus conclude,
Al were it that myne auncestres weren rude,
Yet may the hye God—and so hope I,—
Grante me grace to lyven vertuously.
Thanne am I gentil whan that I bigynne
To lyven vertuously, and weyve synne.
And ther as ye of poverte me repreeve,
The hye God, on whom that we bileeve
In wilful poverte chees to lyve his lyf.
And certes every man, mayden or wyf,
May understonde that Jesus, hevene kyng,
Ne wolde nat chesen vicious lyvyng.
Glad poverte is an honeste thyng, certeyn,
This wole Senec and othere clerkes seyn.
Who so that halt hym payd of his poverte,
I holde hym riche, al hadde he nat a sherte;
He that coveiteth is a povre wight,
For he wolde han that is nat in his myght,
But he that noght hath, ne coveiteth have,
Is riche, although ye holde hym but a knave.
Verray poverte, it syngeth proprely.
Juvenal seith of poverte myrily,
'The povre man, whan he goth by the weye,
Bifore the theves he may synge and pleye.'
Poverte is hateful good, and, as I gesse,
A ful greet bryngere out of bisynesse;
A greet amender eek of sapience
To hym that taketh it in pacience.
Poverte is this, although it seme elenge;

1168 Reed. 1169 *it om.* 1187 pouere. 1199 alenge.

Possessioun, that no wight wol chalenge.
Poverte ful ofte, whan a man is lowe,
Maketh his God and eek hymself to knowe,
Poverte a spectacle is, as thynketh me,
Thurgh which he may hise verray freendes see.
And therfore, sire, syn that I noght yow greve,
Of my poverte namoore ye me repreve.
  Now sire, of elde ye repreve me,
And certes, sire, thogh noon auctoritee
Were in no book, ye gentils of honour
Seyn, that men sholde an oold wight doon favour,
And clepe hym fader for youre gentillesse,
And auctours shal I fynden, as I gesse.
  Now, ther ye seye that I am foul and old,
Than drede you noght to been a cokewold;
For filthe and eelde, al so moot I thee,
Been grete wardeyns upon chastitee;
But nathelees, syn I knowe youre delit,
I shal fulfille youre worldly appetit."
"Chese now," quod she, "oon of thise thynges tweye:
To han me foul and old til that I deye,
And be to yow a trewe humble wyf,
And nevere yow displese in al my lyf;
Or elles ye wol han me yong and fair,
And take youre aventure of the repair
That shal be to youre hous, by cause of me,
Or in som oother place may wel be.
Now chese yourselven wheither that yow liketh."
  This knyght avyseth hym and sore siketh,
But atte laste, he seyde in this manere:
"My lady and my love, and wyf so deere,
I put me in youre wise governance.
Cheseth yourself, which may be moost plesance
And moost honour to yow and me also.
I do no fors the wheither of the two,
For, as yow liketh, it suffiseth me."

"Thanne have I gete of yow maistrie," quod she,
"Syn I may chese and governe as me lest?"
"Ye, certes, wyf," quod he, "I holde it best."
"Kys me," quod she, "we be no lenger wrothe,
For, by my trouthe, I wol be to yow bothe!
This is to seyn, ye, bothe fair and good.
I prey to God that I moote sterven wood
But I to yow be al so good and trewe
As evere was wyf, syn that the world was newe.
And but I be tomorn as fair to seene
As any lady, emperice or queene,
That is bitwixe the est and eke the west,
Dooth with my lyf and deth right as yow lest.
Cast up the curtyn, looke how that it is."
And whan the knyght saugh verraily al this,
That she so fair was, and so yong therto,
For joye he hente hire in hise armes two.
His herte bathed in a bath of blisse,
A thousand tyme arewe he gan hir kisse,
And she obeyed hym in every thyng
That myghte doon hym plesance or likyng.
And thus they lyve unto hir lyves ende
In parfit joye;—and Jesu Crist us sende
Housbondes meeke, yonge, fressh abedde,
And grace toverbyde hem that we wedde.
And eek I praye Jesu shorte hir lyves,
That nat wol be governed by hir wyves;
And olde and angry nygardes of dispence,
God sende hem soone verray pestilence!

1261 pray.

Heere endeth the Wyves tale of Bathe.

PROLOGUE TO THE FRERES TALE

The Prologe of the Freres Tale.

This worthy lymytour, this noble frere,
He made alwey a maner louryng chiere
Upon the Somonour, but for honestee
No vileyns word as yet to hym spak he.
But atte laste he seyde unto the wyf,
"Dame," quod he, "God yeve yow right good lyf!
Ye han heer touched, also moot I thee,
In scole-matere greet difficultee.
Ye han seyd muche thyng right wel, I seye.
But dame, heere as we ryde by the weye
Us nedeth nat to speken but of game,
And lete auctoritees, on Goddes name,
To prechyng and to scole eek of clergye.
But if it lyke to this compaignye,
I wol yow of a somonour telle a game.
Pardee, ye may wel knowe by the name
That of a somonour may no good be sayd;
I praye that noon of you be yvele apayd.
A somonour is a renner up and doun
With mandementz for fornicacioun,
And is ybet at every townes ende."
Oure Hoost tho spak, "A sire, ye sholde be hende
And curteys, as a man of youre estaat.
In compaignye we wol have no debaat.
Telleth youre tale, and lat the Somonour be."
"Nay," quod the Somonour, "lat hym seye to me
What so hym list. Whan it comth to my lot,
By God I shal hym quiten every grot.
I shal hym tellen which a greet honour
It is to be a flaterynge lymytour,

1278 *But* And.

And his office I shal hym telle, ywis." 1295
Oure Hoost answerde, "Pees, namoore of this!"
And after this he seyde unto the Frere,
"Tel forth youre tale, leeve maister deere."

THE TALE.

[How a Summoner, meeting a devil dressed as a yeoman, agrees to share gifts with him as a friend; and is himself consigned to the devil by a poor old woman. Then follow the Summoner's Prologue and Tale of an insult put by a goodman upon a greedy friar.]

GROUP E.

THE CLERKES TALE—PROLOGUE

Heere folweth the Prologe of the clerkes tale of Oxenford.

"Sire clerk of Oxenford," oure Hooste sayde,
"Ye ryde as coy and stille as dooth a mayde,
Were newe spoused, sittynge at the bord.
This day ne herde I of youre tonge a word.
I trowe ye studie about som sophyme;
But Salomon seith, 'every thyng hath tyme.'
For Goddes sake, as beth of bettre cheere;
It is no tyme for to studien heere,
Telle us som myrie tale, by youre fey.
For what man that is entred in a pley,
He nedes moot unto the pley assente;
But precheth nat as freres doon in Lente,
To make us for oure olde synnes wepe,
Ne that thy tale make us nat to slepe.
Telle us som murie thyng of aventures;
Youre termes, youre colours, and youre figures,
Keep hem in stoor, til so be that ye endite
Heigh style, as whan that men to kynges write.
Speketh so pleyn at this tyme, we yow preye,
That we may understonde what ye seye."
This worthy clerk benignely answerde,
"Hooste," quod he, "I am under youre yerde.
Ye han of us as now the governance;
And therfore wol I do yow obeisance
As fer as resoun axeth, hardily.
I wol yow telle a tale, which that I
Lerned at Padwe of a worthy clerk,

1, 22 Hoost.

As preved by his wordes and his werk.
He is now deed, and nayled in his cheste;
I prey to God so yeve his soule reste.
Fraunceys Petrark, the lauriat poete,
Highte this clerk, whos rethorike sweete
Enlumyned al Ytaille of poetrie,
As Lynyan dide of philosophie,
Or lawe, or oother art particuler.
But deeth, that wol nat suffre us dwellen heer
But as it were a twynklyng of an eye,
Hem bothe hath slayn, and alle shul we dye.
But forth to tellen of this worthy man,
That taughte me this tale as I bigan,
I seye, that first with heigh stile he enditeth
Er he the body of his tale writeth,
A prohemye in the which discryveth he
Pemond, and of Saluces the contree,
And speketh of Apennyn, the hilles hye,
That been the boundes of Westlumbardye;
And of Mount Vesulus in special,
Where as the Poo out of a welle smal
Taketh his firste sprynġyng and his sours,
That estward ay encresseth in his cours
To Emeleward, to Ferrare, and Venyse;
The which a long thyng were to devyse.
And trewely, as to my juggement,
Me thynketh it a thyng impertinent,
Save that he wole convoyen his mateere;
But this his tale, which that ye may heere."

31 Perak. 32 rethorik. 36 *suffre us om.*

THE CLERKES TALE

Heere bigynneth the tale of the Clerk of Oxenford.

Ther is, at the west syde of Ytaille,
Doun at the roote of Vesulus the colde,
A lusty playne, habundant of vitaille,
Where many a tour and toun thou mayst biholde
That founded were in tyme of fadres olde,
And many another delitable sighte,
And Saluces this noble contree highte.

A markys whilom lord was of that lond,
As were hise worthy eldres hym bifore,
And obeisant and redy to his hond
Were alle hise liges, bothe lasse and moore.
Thus in delit he lyveth, and hath doon yoore,
Biloved and drad thurgh favour of Fortune,
Bothe of hise lordes and of his commune.

Therwith he was, to speke as of lynage,
The gentilleste yborn of Lumbardye;
A fair persone, and strong, and yong of age,
And ful of honour and of curteisye,
Discreet ynogh his contree for to gye,
Save that in somme thynges that he was to blame,
And Walter was this yonge lordes name.

I blame hym thus, that he considereth noght
In tyme comynge what hym myghte bityde,
But in his lust present was al his thoght,
As for to hauke and hunte on every syde.
Wel ny alle othere cures leet he slyde;
And eek he nolde,—and that was worst of alle—
Wedde no wyf, for noght that may bifalle.

74 *of om.*

Oonly that point his peple bar so soore,
That flokmeele on a day they to hym wente,
And oon of hem, that wisest was of loore,
Or elles that the lord best wolde assente,
That he sholde telle hym what his peple mente,
Or elles koude he shewe wel swich mateere,
He to the markys seyde as ye shul heere:

"O noble Markys, youre humanitee
Asseureth us, and yeveth us hardinesse,
As ofte as tyme is of necessitee
That we to yow mowe telle oure hevynesse.
Accepteth, lord, now for youre gentillesse
That we with pitous herte unto yow pleyne,
And lat youre eres nat my voys desdeyne,

Al have I noght to doone in this mateere
Moore than another man hath in this place;
Yet for as muche as ye, my lord so deere,
Han alwey shewed me favour and grace,
I dar the bettre aske of yow a space
Of audience to shewen oure requeste,
And ye, my lord, to doon right as yow leste.

For certes, lord, so wel us liketh yow
And al youre werk, and evere han doon that we
Ne koude nat us-self devysen how
We myghte lyven in moore felicitee,
Save o thyng, lord, if it youre wille be,
That for to been a wedded man yow leste,
Thanne were youre peple in sovereyn hertes reste.

Boweth youre nekke under that blisful yok
Of soveraynetee, noght of servyse,
Which that men clepeth spousaille or wedlok;

93 *and yeveth* to yeve. 110 *it om.*

And thenketh, lord, among youre thoghtes wyse
How that oure dayes passe in sondry wyse,
For thogh we slepe, or wake, or rome, or ryde,
Ay fleeth the tyme, it nyl no man abyde.

And thogh youre grene youthe floure as yit,
In crepeth age alwey, as stille as stoon,
And deeth manaceth every age, and smyt
In ech estaat, for ther escapeth noon;
And al so certein as we knowe echoon
That we shul deye, as uncerteyn we alle
Been of that day, whan deeth shal on us falle.

Accepteth thanne of us the trewe entente
That nevere yet refuseden thyn heeste;
And we wol, lord, if that ye wole assente,
Chese yow a wyf in short tyme atte leeste,
Born of the gentilleste and of the meeste
Of al this land, so that it oghte seme
Honour to God and yow, as we kan deeme.

Delivere us out of al this bisy drede,
And taak a wyf for hye Goddes sake,
For if it so bifelle, as God forbede,
That thurgh your deeth your lyne sholde slake,
And that a straunge successour sholde take
Youre heritage, o wo were us alyve!
Wherfore we pray you hastily to wyve."

Hir meeke preyere and hir pitous cheere
Made the markys herte han pitee.
"Ye wol," quod he, "myn owene peple deere,
To that I nevere erst thoughte, streyne me.
I me rejoysed of my liberte,
That seelde tyme is founde in mariage.
Ther I was free, I moot been in servage.

But nathelees I se youre trewe entente,
And truste upon youre wit, and have doon ay;
Wherfore of my free wyl I wole assente
To wedde me, as soone as evere I may.
But ther as ye han profred me this day
To chese me a wyf, I yow relesse
That choys, and prey yow of that profre cesse.

For God it woot, that children ofte been
Unlyk hir worthy eldres hem bifore.
Bountee comth al of God, nat of the streen,
Of which they been engendred and ybore.
I truste in Goddes bontee; and therfore
My mariage, and myn estaat and reste,
I hym bitake, he may doon as hym leste.

Lat me allone in chesynge of my wyf,
That charge upon my bak I wole endure;
But I yow preye, and charge up on youre lyf
That what wyf that I take, ye me assure
To worshipe hir, whil that hir lyf may dure,
In word and werk, bothe heere and everywheere,
As she an emperoures doghter weere.

And forthermoore, this shal ye swere, that ye
Agayn my choys shul neither grucche ne stryve,
For sith I shal forgoon my libertee
At youre requeste, as evere moot I thryve,
Ther as myn herte is set, ther wol I wyve!
And but ye wole assente in this manere,
I prey yow, speketh namoore of this matere."

With hertely wyl they sworen and assenten
To al this thyng, ther seyde no wight nay,
Bisekynge hym of grace er that they wenten,

154 *yow om.* 165 *That om.*

That he wolde graunten hem a certein day
Of his spousaille, as soone as evere he may,
For yet alwey the peple somwhat dredde
Lest that this markys no wyf wolde wedde.

He graunted hem a day, swich as hym leste,
On which he wolde be wedded sikerly,
And seyde he dide al this at hir requeste;
And they with humble entente, buxomly,
Knelynge upon hir knees ful reverently
Hym thonken alle, and thus they han an ende
Of hir entente, and hoom agayn they wende.

And heerupon he to hise officeres
Comaundeth for the feste to purveye,
And to hise privee knyghtes and squieres
Swich charge yaf, as hym liste on hem leye.
And they to his comandement obeye,
And ech of hem dooth al his diligence
To doon unto the feeste reverence.

Explicit prima pars.

Incipit secunda pars.

Noght fer fro thilke paleys honurable
Ther as this markys shoop his mariage,
Ther stood a throop, of site delitable,
In which that povre folk of that village
Hadden hir beestes and hir herbergage,
And of hir labour tooke hir sustenance,
After that the erthe yaf hem habundance.

Amonges thise povre folk ther dwelte a man
Which that was holden povrest of hem alle;
(But hye God somtyme senden kan
His grace into a litel oxes stalle)

Janicula men of that throop hym calle.
A doghter hadde he, fair ynogh to sighte,
And Grisildis this yonge mayden highte.

But for to speke of vertuous beautee,
Thanne was she oon the faireste under sonne,
For povreliche yfostred up was she,
No likerous lust was thurgh hir herte yronne.
Wel ofter of the welle than of the tonne
She drank, and for she wolde vertu plese
She knew wel labour but noon ydel ese.

But thogh this mayde tendre were of age,
Yet in the brest of hire virginitee
Ther was enclosed rype and sad corage;
And in greet reverence and charitee
Hir olde povre fader fostred shee.
A fewe sheepe, spynnynge on feeld she kepte,
—She wolde noght been ydel, til she slepte.

And whan she homward cam, she wolde brynge
Wortes, or othere herbes tymes ofte,
The whiche she shredde and seeth for hir lyvynge,
And made hir bed ful harde and no thyng softe;
And ay she kepte hir fadres lyf on lofte
With everich obeisaunce and diligence
That child may doon to fadres reverence.

Upon Grisilde, this povre creature,
Ful ofte sithe this markys caste his eye,
As he on huntyng rood paraventure.
And whan it fil that he myghte hire espye,
He noght with wantowne lookyng of folye
Hise eyen caste on hir, but in sad wyse,
Upon hir chiere he wolde hym ofte avyse,

211 bountee. 235 that it. 238 *wolde* gan.

Commendynge in his herte hir wommanhede
And eek hir vertu, passynge any wight
Of so yong age, as wel in chiere as dede.
For thogh the peple hadde no greet insight
In vertu, he considered ful right
Hir bountee, and disposed that he wolde
Wedde hir oonly, if evere he wedde sholde.

The day of weddyng cam, but no wight kan
Telle what womman that it sholde be,
For which merveille wondred many a man,
And seyden, whan that they were in privetee,
"Wol nat oure lord yet leve his vanytee?
Wol he nat wedde? allas, allas, the while!
Why wole he thus hymself and us bigile?"

But nathelees this markys hath doon make
Of gemmes set in gold and in asure
Brooches and rynges, for Grisildis sake,
And of hir clothyng took he the mesure,
By a mayde lyk to hir stature,
And eek of othere ornementes alle
That unto swich a weddyng sholde falle.

The time of undren of the same day
Approcheth, that this weddyng sholde be;
And al the paleys put was in array,
Bothe halle and chambres, ech in his degree,
Houses of office stuffed with plentee
Ther maystow seen, of deyntevous vitaille,
That may be founde as fer as last Ytaille.

This roial markys, richely arrayed,
Lordes and ladyes in his compaignye,
The whiche that to the feeste weren yprayed,

258 aornementes.

And of his retenue the bachelrye,
With many a soun of sondry melodye
Unto the village, of the which I tolde,
In this array the righte wey han holde.

Grisilde (of this, God woot, ful innocent,
That for hir shapen was al this array)
To fecchen water at a welle is went,
And cometh hoom as soone as ever she may;
For wel she hadde herd seyd, that thilke day
The markys sholde wedde, and if she myghte,
She wolde fayn han seyn som of that sighte.

She thoghte, "I wole with othere maydens stonde,
That been my felawes, in oure dore, and se
The markysesse, and therfore wol I fonde
To doon at hoom as soone as it may be
The labour, which that longeth unto me,
And thanne I may at leyser hir biholde,
If she this wey unto the castel holde."

And as she wolde over hir thresshfold gon
The markys cam and gan hire for to calle,
And she set doun hir water pot anon
Biside the thresshfold in an oxes stalle,
And doun up-on hir knes she gan to falle,
And with sad contenance kneleth stille,
Til she had herd what was the lordes will.

This thoghtful markys spak unto this mayde
Ful sobrely, and seyde in this manere,
"Where is youre fader, O Grisildis?" he sayde,
And she with reverence in humble cheere
Answerde, "Lord, he is al redy heere."
And in she gooth, withouten lenger lette,
And to the markys she hir fader fette.

277 comth.

He by the hand thanne took this olde man,
And seyde thus, whan he hym hadde asyde,
"Janicula, I neither may ne kan
Lenger the plesance of myn herte hyde;
If that thou vouchsauf, what so bityde,
Thy doghter wol I take, er that I wende,
As for my wyf unto hir lyves ende.

Thou lovest me, I woot it wel certeyn,
And art my feithful lige man ybore,
And all that liketh me, I dar wel seyn,
It liketh thee; and specially therfore
Tel me that poynt that I have seyd bifore,
If that thou wolt unto that purpos drawe,
To take me as for thy sone-in-lawe."

This sodeyn cas this man astonyed so,
That reed he wax abayst and al quakyng
He stood, unnethes seyde he wordes mo,
But oonly thus, "Lord," quod he, "my willynge
Is as ye wole, ne ayeyns youre likynge
I wol no thyng, ye be my lord so deere;
Right as yow lust governeth this mateere."

"Yet wol I," quod this markys softely,
"That in thy chambre I and thou and she
Have a collacioun, and wostow why?
For I wol axe, if it hir wille be
To be my wyf, and reule hir after me;
And al this shal be doon in thy presence,
I wol noght speke out of thyn audience."

And in the chambre whil they were aboute
Hir tretys which as ye shal after heere,
The peple cam unto the hous withoute,
And wondred hem in how honeste manere

And tentifly she kepte hir fader deere.
But outrely Grisildis wondre myghte
For nevere erst ne saugh she swich a sighte.

No wonder is thogh that she were astoned
To seen so greet a gest come in that place;
She nevere was to swiche gestes woned,
For which she looked with ful pale face—
But shortly forth this tale for to chace,
Thise arn the wordes that the markys sayde
To this benigne verray feithful mayde.

"Grisilde," he seyde, "ye shal wel understonde
It liketh to youre fader and to me
That I yow wedde, and eek it may so stonde,
As, I suppose, ye wol that it so be.
But thise demandes axe I first," quod he,
"That sith it shal be doon in hastif wyse,
Wol ye assente, or elles yow avyse?

I seye this, be ye redy with good herte
To al my lust, and that I frely may,
As me best thynketh, do yow laughe or smerte,
And nevere ye to grucche it nyght ne day,
And eek whan I sey ye, ne sey nat nay,
Neither by word, ne frownyng contenance?
Swere this, and heere I swere yow alliance."

Wondrynge upon this word, quakynge for drede,
She seyde, "Lord, undigne and unworthy
Am I to thilke honour, that ye me beede,
But as ye wole yourself, right so wol I.
And heere I swere, that nevere willyngly
In werk ne thoght I nyl yow disobeye,
For to be deed, though me were looth to deye."

"This is ynogh, Grisilde myn," quod he,
And forth he gooth with a ful sobre cheere
Out at the dore, and after that cam she;
And to the peple he seyde in this manere,
"This is my wyf," quod he, "that standeth heere;
Honoureth hir, and loveth hir, I preye,
Whoso me loveth; ther is namoore to seye."

And for that nothyng of hir olde geere
She sholde brynge into his hous, he bad
That wommen sholde dispoillen hir right theere;—
Of which thise ladyes were nat right glad
To handle hir clothes, wherinne she was clad—
But nathelees, this mayde bright of hewe
Fro foot to heed they clothed han al newe.

Hir heris han they kembd, that lay untressed
Ful rudely, and with hir fyngres smale
A corone on hir heed they han ydressed,
And sette hir ful of nowches grete and smale.
Of hir array what sholde I make a tale?
Unnethe the peple hire knew for hir fairnesse
Whan she translated was in swich richesse.

This markys hath hir spoused with a ryng
Broght for the same cause, and thanne hir sette
Upon an hors, snow-whit and wel amblyng,
And to his paleys, er he lenger lette,
With joyful peple that hir ladde and mette
Convoyed hir; and thus the day they spende
In revel, til the sonne gan descende.

And shortly forth this tale for to chace,
I seye, that to this newe markysesse
God hath swich favour sent hir of his grace,
That it ne semed nat by liklynesse

That she was born and fed in rudenesse
As in a cote or in an oxe-stalle,
But norissed in an emperoures halle.

To every wight she woxen is so deere
And worshipful, that folk ther she was bore
And from hir birthe knewe hir yeer by yeere,
Unnethe trowed they, but dorste han swore
That she to Janicle, of which I spak bifore,
She doghter nere, for as by conjecture,
Hem thoughte she was another creature.

For though that evere vertuous was she,
She was encressed in swich excellence,
Of thewes goode, yset in heigh bountee,
And so discreet and fair of eloquence,
So benigne, and so digne of reverence,
And koude so the peples herte embrace,
That ech hir lovede, that looked on hir face.

Noght oonly of Saluces in the toun
Publiced was the bountee of hir name,
But eek biside in many a regioun,
If oon seide wel, another seyde the same;
So spradde of hir heighe bountee the fame
That men and wommen, as wel yonge as olde,
Goon to Saluce upon hir to biholde.

Thus Walter lowely, nay! but roially
Wedded with fortunat honestetee,
In Goddes pees lyveth ful esily
At hoom, and outward grace ynogh had he,
And for he saugh that under low degree
Was ofte vertu hid, the peple hym heelde
A prudent man, and that is seyn ful seelde.

405 were. 415 beaute. 418 *fame* name. 425 *low* heigh. 426 *ofte om.*

Nat oonly this Grisildis thurgh hir wit
Koude al the feet of wyfly humblenesse,
But eek, whan that the cas required it,
The commune profit koude she redresse.
Ther nas discord, rancour, ne hevynesse
In al that land, that she ne koude apese,
And wisely brynge hem alle in reste and ese.

Though that hir housbonde absent were anon
If gentil men, or othere of hir contree
Were wrothe, she wolde bryngen hem aton.
So wise and rype wordes hadde she,
And juggementz of so greet equitee,
That she from hevene sent was, as men wende,
Peple to save and every wrong tamende.

Nat longe tyme after that this Grisild
Was wedded, she a doghter hath ybore—
Al had hir levere have born a man child;
Glad was this markys and the folk therfore,
For though a mayde child coome al bifore,
She may unto a knave child atteyne
By liklihede, syn she nys nat bareyne.

Explicit secunda pars.

Incipit tercia pars.

Ther fil, as it bifalleth tymes mo,
Whan that this child had souked but a throwe,
This markys in his herte longeth so
To tempte his wyf, hir sadnesse for to knowe,
That he ne myghte out of his herte throwe
This merveillous desir his wyf tassaye.
Nedelees, God woot, he thoghte hir for taffraye.

He hadde assayed hir ynogh bifore,
And foond hir evere good; what neded it

Hir for to tempte and alwey moore and moore?
Though som men preise it for a subtil wit,
But as for me, I seye that yvele it sit
To assaye a wyf, whan that it is no nede,
And putten hir in angwyssh and in drede.

For which this markys wroghte in this manere;
He cam allone a nyght, ther as she lay,
With stierne face and with ful trouble cheere,
And seyde thus, "Grisilde," quod he, "that day
That I yow took out of your povere array,
And putte yow in estaat of heigh noblesse,
Ye have nat that forgeten, as I gesse.

I seye, Grisilde, this present dignitee
In which that I have put yow, as I trowe
Maketh yow nat foryetful for to be
That I yow took in povre estaat ful lowe
For any wele ye moot youreselven knowe.
Taak heede of every word that y yow seye,
Ther is no wight that hereth it but we tweye.

Ye woot yourself wel how that ye cam heere
Into this hous, it is nat longe ago.
And though to me that ye be lief and deere,
Unto my gentils ye be no thyng so.
They seyn, to hem it is greet shame and wo
For to be subgetz, and to been in servage,
To thee that born art of a smal village.

And namely, sith thy doghter was ybore,
Thise wordes han they spoken, doutelees;
But I desire, as I have doon bifore,
To lyve my lyf with hem in reste and pees.
I may nat in this caas be recchelees,
I moot doon with thy doghter for the beste,
Nat as I wolde, but as my peple leste.

And yet God woot, this is ful looth to me!
But nathelees, withoute youre wityng
I wol nat doon, but this wol I," quod he,
"That ye to me assente as in this thyng.
Shewe now youre pacience in youre werkyng,
That ye me highte and swore in youre village,
That day that maked was oure mariage."

Whan she had herd al this, she noght ameved
Neither in word, or chiere, or countenaunce;
For as it semed she was nat agreved.
She seyde, "Lord, al lyth in youre plesaunce,
My child, and I, with hertely obeisaunce
Been youres al, and ye mowe save and spille
Your owene thyng, werketh after youre wille.

Ther may no thyng, God so my soule save,
Liken to yow, that may displese me,
Ne I ne desire no thyng for to have,
Ne drede for to leese save oonly yee;
This wyl is in myn herte, and ay shal be;
No lengthe of tyme or deeth may this deface,
Ne chaunge my corage to another place."

Glad was this markys of hir answeryng,
But yet he feyned as he were nat so.
Al drery was his cheere and his lookyng,
Whan that he sholde out of the chambre go.
Soone after this, a furlong wey or two,
He prively hath toold al his entente
Unto a man, and to his wyf hym sente.

A maner sergeant was this privee man,
The which that feithful ofte he founden hadde
In thynges grete, and eek swich folk wel kan
Doon execucioun on thynges badde.

The lord knew wel that he hym loved and dradde;—
And whan this sergeant wiste the lordes wille,
Into the chambre he stalked hym ful stille.

"Madame," he seyde, "ye moote foryeve it me
Though I do thyng to which I am constreyned,
Ye been so wys, that ful wel knowe ye
That lordes heestes mowe nat been yfeyned,
They mowe wel been biwailled and compleyned,
But men moote nede unto hir lust obeye;
And so wol I, ther is namoore to seye.

This child I am comanded for to take."
And spak namoore, but out the child he hente
Despitously, and gan a cheere make
As though he wolde han slayn it er he wente.
Grisildis moot al suffren and censente,
And as a lamb she sitteth meke and stille,
And leet this crueel sergeant doon his wille.

Suspecious was the diffame of this man,
Suspect his face, suspect his word also,
Suspect the tyme in which he this bigan.
Allas, hir doghter that she loved so!
She wende he wolde han slawen it right tho;
But nathelees she neither weep ne syked,
Consentynge hir to that the markys lyked.

But atte laste speken she bigan,
And mekely she to the sergeant preyde,
So as he was a worthy gentil man,
That she moste kisse hire child, er that it deyde,
And in hir barm this litel child she leyde,
With ful sad face, and gan the child to kisse,
And lulled it, and after gan it blisse.

547 to speken.

And thus she seyde in hir benigne voys,
"Fareweel, my child, I shal thee nevere see,
But sith I thee have marked with the croys
Of thilke fader blessed moote thou be,
That for us deyde upon a croys of tree.
Thy soule, litel child, I hym bitake,
For this nyght shaltow dyen for my sake."

I trowe, that to a norice in this cas
It had been hard this reuthe for to se;
Wel myghte a mooder thanne han cryd 'allas!'
But nathelees so sad and stidefast was she,
That she endured al adversitee,
And to the sergeant mekely she sayde,
"Have heer agayn your litel yonge mayde."

"Gooth now," quod she, "and dooth my lordes heeste;
But o thyng wol I prey yow of youre grace,
That, but my lord forbad yow atte leeste,
Burieth this litel body in som place
That beestes ne no briddes it torace."
But he no word wol to that purpos seye,
But took the child, and wente upon his weye.

This sergeant cam unto his lord ageyn,
And of Grisildis wordes and hir cheere
He tolde hym point for point, in short and pleyn,
And hym presenteth with his doghter deere.
Somwhat this lord hath routhe in his manere,
But nathelees his purpos heeld he stille,
As lordes doon whan they wol han hir wille.

And bad his sergeant, that he pryvely
Sholde this child ful softe wynde and wrappe,
With alle circumstances tendrely,

557 *thou* he. 583 *ful om.*

And carie it in a cofre or in a lappe,
But upon peyne his heed of for to swappe
That no man sholde knowe of his entente,
Ne whenne he cam, ne whider that he wente.

But at Boloigne to his suster deere,
That thilke tyme of Panik was Countesse,
He sholde it take, and shewe hir this mateere,
Bisekynge hir to doon hir bisynesse
This child to fostre in alle gentillesse,
And whos child that it was, he bad hire hyde
From every wight, for oght that may bityde.

The sergeant gooth, and hath fulfild this thyng,
But to this markys now retourne we,
For now gooth he ful faste ymaginyng,
If by his wyves cheere he myghte se
Or by hir word aperceyve that she
Were chaunged, but he nevere hir koude fynde,
But evere in oon ylike sad and kynde.

As glad, as humble, as bisy in servyse,
And eek in love, as she was wont to be,
Was she to hym in every maner wyse,
Ne of hir doghter noght a word spak she.
Noon accident for noon adversitee
Was seyn in hir, ne nevere hir doghter name
Ne nempned she, in ernest nor in game.

Explicit tercia pars.

Sequitur pars quarta.

In this estaat ther passed been foure yeer
Er she with childe was; but as God wolde,
A knave child she bar by this Walter,

588 *he cam om.* 590 Pavik. 594 *hire* hym. 612 *knave* man.

Ful gracious and fair for to biholde.
And whan that folk it to his fader tolde,
Nat oonly he, but al his contree, merye
Was for this child, and God they thanke and herye.

Whan it was two yeer old, and fro the brest
Departed of his norice, on a day
This markys caughte yet another lest
To tempte his wyf yet ofter if he may.
O, nedelees was she tempted in assay!
But wedded men ne knowe no mesure,
Whan that they fynde a pacient creature.

"Wyf," quod this markys, "ye han herd er this
My peple sikly berth oure mariage;
And namely sith my sone yboren is,
Now is it worse than evere in al oure age.
The murmure sleeth myn herte and my corage,
For to myne eres comth the voys so smerte,
That it wel ny destroyed hath myn herte.

Now sey they thus, 'whan Walter is agon,
Thanne shal the blood of Janicle succede,
And been oure lord, for oother have we noon.'
Swiche wordes seith my peple, out of drede,
Wel oughte I of swich murmur taken heede,
For certeinly I drede swich sentence,
Though they nat pleyn speke in myn audience.

I wolde lyve in pees, if that I myghte;
Wherfore I am disposed outrely
As I his suster servede by nyghte,
Right so thenke I to serve hym pryvely.
This warne I yow, that ye nat sodeynly
Out of youreself for no wo sholde outreye.
Beth pacient, and therof I yow preye."

626 yborn. 640 served.

"I have," quod she, "seyd thus, and evere shal,
I wol no thyng, ne nyl no thyng, certayn,
But as yow list, naught greveth me at al
Though that my doughter and my sone be slayn—
At youre comandement, this is to sayn—
I have noght had no part of children tweyne
But first siknesse, and after wo and peyne.

Ye been oure lord, dooth with your owene thyng
Right as yow list, axeth no reed at me;
For as I lefte at hoom al my clothyng,
Whan I first cam to yow, right so," quod she,
"Lefte I my wyl and al my libertee,
And took youre clothyng, wherfore I yow preye,
Dooth youre plesaunce; I wol youre lust obeye.

And certes, if I hadde prescience
Youre wyl to knowe, er ye youre lust me tolde,
I wolde it doon withouten necligence.
But now I woot your lust and what ye wolde,
Al your plesance ferme and stable I holde,
For wiste I that my deeth wolde do yow ese,
Right gladly wolde I dyen yow to plese.

Deth may noght make no comparisoun
Unto youre love!" and whan this markys say
The constance of his wyf, he caste adoun
Hise eyen two, and wondreth that she may
In pacience suffre al this array;
And forth he goth with drery contenance,
But to his herte it was ful greet plesance.

This ugly sergeant, in the same wyse
That he hir doghter caughte, right so he
Or worse, if men worse kan devyse,
Hath hent hir sone, that ful was of beautee,

And evere in oon so pacient was she,
That she no chiere maade of hevynesse,
But kiste hir sone, and after gan it blesse.

Save this, she preyde hym, that if he myghte,
Hir litel sone he wolde in erthe grave
His tendre lymes, delicaat to sighte,
Fro fowèles and fro beestes for to save.
But she noon answere of hym myghte have,
He wente his wey, as hym nothyng ne roghte,
But to Boloigne he tendrely it broght.

This markys wondred evere lenger the moore
Upon hir pacience, and if that he
Ne hadde soothly knowen therbifoore
That parfitly hir children loved she,
He wolde have wend that of som subtiltee,
And of malice, or for crueel corage,
That she hadde suffred this with sad visage.

But wel he knew that next hymself, certayn,
She loved hir children best in every wyse;
But now of wommen wolde I axen fayn,
If thise assayes myghte nat suffise,
What koude a sturdy housbonde moore devyse
To preeve hire wyfhod or hir stedefastnesse,
And he continuynge evere in sturdinesse?

But ther been folk of swich condicioun,
That whan they have a certein purpos take
They kan nat stynte of hir entencioun,
But right as they were bounden to that stake
They wol nat of that firste purpos slake.
Right so this markys fulliche hath purposed
To tempte his wyf, as he was first disposed.

He waiteth, if by word or contenance
That she to hym was changed of corage;
But nevere koude he fynde variance,
She was ay oon in herte and in visage.
And ay the forther that she was in age,
The moore trewe—if that it were possible—
She was to hym in love, and moore penyble.

For which it semed thus, that of hem two
Ther nas but o wyl; for, as Walter leste,
The same lust was hir plesance also,
And, God be thanked, al fil for the beste.
She shewed wel, for no worldly unreste
A wyf as of hirself no thing ne sholde
Wille in effect, but as hir housbonde wolde.

The sclaundre of Walter ofte and wyde spradde,
That of a crueel herte he wikkedly,
For he a povre womman wedded hadde,
Hath mordred bothe his children prively.—
Swich murmure was among hem comunly;
No wonder is, for to the peples ere
Ther cam no word, but that they mordred were.

For which, wher as his peple therbifore
Hadde loved hym wel, the sclaundre of his diffame
Made hem, that they hym hatede therfore,
To been a mordrere is an hateful name;
But nathelees, for ernest ne for game
He of his crueel purpos nolde stente:
To tempte his wyf was set al his entente.

Whan that his doghter twelf yeer was of age,
He to the court of Rome in subtil wyse
Enformed of his wyl sente his message,

731 hated.

Comaundynge hem swiche bulles to devyse
As to his crueel purpos may suffyse,
How that the pope as for his peples reste
Bad hym to wedde another, if hym leste.

I seye, he bad they sholde countrefete
The popes bulles, makynge mencioun
That he hath leve his firste wyf to lete
As by the popes dispensacioun,
To stynte rancour and dissencioun
Bitwixe his peple and hym, thus seyde the bulle,
The which they han publiced atte fulle.

The rude peple, as it no wonder is,
Wenden ful wel that it hadde be right so;
But whan thise tidynges cam to Grisildis,
I deeme that hir herte was ful wo.
But she, ylike sad for everemo,
Disposed was, this humble creature,
The adversitee of Fortune al tendure,

Abidynge evere his lust and his plesance
To whom that she was yeven, herte and al,
As to hir verray worldly suffisance.
But shortly, if this storie I tellen shal,
This markys writen hath in special
A lettre, in which he sheweth his entente,
And secreely he to Boloigne it sente;

To the Erl of Panyk, which that hadde tho
Wedded his suster, preyde he specially
To bryngen hoom agayn hise children two,
In honurable estaat al openly;
But o thyng he hym preyede outrely,
That he to no wight, though men wolde enquere,
Sholde nat telle whos children that they were,

768 preyde.

But seye, the mayden sholde ywedded be
Unto the Markys of Saluce anon.
And as this Erl was preyed, so dide he;
For at day set he on his wey is goon
Toward Saluce, and lordes many oon,
In riche array this mayden for to gyde,
Hir yonge brother ridynge hir bisyde.

Arrayed was toward hir mariage
This fresshe mayde, ful of gemmes cleere;
Hir brother, which that seven yeer was of age,
Arrayed eek ful fressh in his manere.
And thus in greet noblesse, and with glad cheere,
Toward Saluces shapynge hir journey,
Fro day to day they ryden in hir wey.

Explicit quarta pars.

Sequitur pars quinta.

Among al this, after his wikke usage,
This markys yet his wyf to tempte moore
To the outtreste preeve of hir corage,
Fully to han experience and loore,
If that she were as stidefast as bifoore,
He on a day in open audience
Ful boistously hath seyd hir this sentence.

"Certes, Grisilde, I hadde ynogh plesance,
To han yow to my wyf for your goodnesse,
As for youre trouthe, and for your obeisance—
Noght for youre lynage, ne for youre richesse;
But now knowe I, in verray soothfastnesse,
That in greet lordshipe, if I wel avyse,
Ther is greet servitute in sondry wyse.

773 preyd.

I may nat doon as every plowman may;
My peple me constreyneth for to take
Another wyf, and crien day by day,
And eek the pope, rancour for to slake,
Consenteth it, that dar I undertake—
And treweliche thus muche I wol yow seye,
My newe wyf is comynge by the weye.

Be strong of herte, and voyde anon hir place,
And thilke dower that ye broghten me
Taak it agayn, I graunte it of my grace.
Retourneth to youre fadres hous," quod he;
"No man may alwey han prosperitee.
With evene herte I rede yow tendure
This strook of Fortune or of aventure."

And she answerde agayn in pacience,
"My lord," quod she, "I woot and wiste alway
How that bitwixen youre magnificence
And my poverte, no wight kan ne may
Maken comparisoun, it is no nay.
I ne heeld me nevere digne in no manere
To be your wyf, no, ne youre chamberere.

And in this hous ther ye me lady maade,
The heighe God take I for my witnesse,
And also wysly he my soule glaade,
I nevere heeld me lady ne maistresse,
But humble servant to youre worthynesse,
And evere shal whil that my lyf may dure
Aboven every worldly creature.

That ye so longe of youre benignitee
Han holden me in honour and nobleye,
Wher as I was noght worthy for to bee,

819 chambrere. 829 *for to om.*

That thonke I God and yow, to whom I preye
Foryelde it yow; ther is namoore to seye.
Unto my fader gladly wol I wende,
And with hym dwelle unto my lyves ende.

Ther I was fostred of a child ful smal,
Til I be deed, my lyf ther wol I lede,
A wydwe clene in body, herte, and al,
For sith I yaf to yow my maydenhede
And am youre trewe wyf, it is no drede,
God shilde swich a lordes wyf to take
Another man, to housbonde or to make.

And of youre newe wyf, God of his grace
So graunte yow wele and prosperitee,
For I wol gladly yelden hir my place
In which that I was blisful wont to bee.
For sith it liketh yow my lord," quod shee,
"That whilom weren al myn hertes reste,
That I shal goon, I wol goon whan yow leste.

But ther as ye me profre swich dowaire
As I first broghte, it is wel in my mynde
It were my wrecched clothes, no thyng faire,
The whiche to me were hard now for to fynde.
O goode God! how gentil and how kynde
Ye semed by youre speche and youre visage
The day that maked was oure mariage!

But sooth is seyd, algate I fynde it trewe,
(For in effect it preeved is on me)
Love is noght oold, as whan that it is newe,
But certes, lord, for noon adversitee,
To dyen in the cas it shal nat bee
That evere in word or werk I shal repente
That I yow yaf myn herte in hool entente.

My lord, ye woot that in my fadres place
Ye dide me streepe out of my povre weede,
And richely me cladden of youre grace.
To yow broghte I noght elles, out of drede,
But feith, and nakednesse, and maydenhede.
And heere agayn my clothyng I restoore,
And eek my weddyng ryng for everemo.

The remenant of youre jueles redy be
In-with youre chambre, dar I saufly sayn.
Naked out of my fadres hous," quod she,
"I cam, and naked moot I turne agayn.
Al your plesance wol I folwen fayn,
But yet I hope it be nat your entente
That I smoklees out of your paleys wente.

Ye koude nat doon so dishoneste a thyng,
That thilke wombe in which your children leye,
Sholde biforn the peple in my walkyng
Be seyn al bare; wherfore I yow preye,
Lat me nat lyk a worm go by the weye!
Remembre yow, myn owene lord so deere,
I was your wyf, though I unworthy weere.

Wherfore, in gerdoun of my maydenhede
Which that I broghte, and noght agayn I bere,
As voucheth sauf to yeve me to my meede
But swich a smok as I was wont to were,
That I therwith may wrye the wombe of here
That was your wyf, and heer take I my leeve
Of yow, myn owene lord, lest I yow greve."

"The smok," quod he, "that thou hast on thy bak,
Lat it be stille, and bere it forth with thee."
But wel unnethes thilke word he spak,
But wente his wey for routhe and for pitee.

Biforn the folk hirselven strepeth she,
And in hir smok, with heed and foot al bare,
Toward hir fader hous forth is she fare.

The folk hir folwe, wepynge in hir weye,
And Fortune ay they cursen, as they goon.
But she fro wepyng kepte hir eyen dreye,
Ne in this tyme word ne spak she noon.
Hir fader, that this tidynge herde anoon,
Curseth the day and tyme that nature
Shoop hym to been a lyves creature.

For out of doute this olde povre man
Was evere in suspect of hir mariage,
For evere he demed, sith that it bigan,
That whan the lord fulfild hadde his corage,
Hym wolde thynke it were a disparage
To his estaat, so lowe for talighte,
And voyden hir as soone as ever he myghte.

Agayns his doghter hastiliche goth he,
For he by noyse of folk knew hir comynge,
And with hir olde coote, as it myghte be,
He covered hir, ful sorwefully wepynge,
But on hir body myghte he it nat brynge.
For rude was the clooth, and moore of age
By dayes fele, than at hir mariage.

Thus with hir fader for a certeyn space
Dwelleth this flour of wyfly pacience,
That neither by hir wordes ne hir face,
Biforn the folk ne eek in hir absence,
Ne shewed she that hir was doon offence,
Ne of hir heighe estaat no remembraunce
Ne hadde she, as by hir contenaunce.

916 and she.

No wonder is, for in hir grete estaat
Hir goost was evere in pleyn humylitee.
No tendre mouth, noon herte delicaat,
No pompe, no semblant of roialtee,
But ful of pacient benyngnytee,
Discreet and pridelees, ay honurable,
And to hir housbonde evere meke and stable.

Men speke of Job, and moost for his humblesse,
As clerkes whan hem list konne wel endite,
Namely of men; but as in soothfastnesse,
Though clerkes preise wommen but a lite,
Ther kan no man in humblesse hym acquite,
As womman kan, ne kan been half so trewe
As wommen been, but it be falle of newe.

[*Pars sexta.*]

Fro Boloigne is this Erl of Panyk come,
Of which the fame up sprang to moore and lesse,
And in the peples eres, alle and some,
Was kouth eek that a newe markysesse
He with hym broghte, in swich pompe and richesse,
That nevere was ther seyn with mannes eye
So noble array in al Westlumbardye.

The markys, which that shoop and knew al this,
Er that thise Erl was come, sente his message
For thilke sely povre Grisildis;
And she with humble herte and glad visage,
Nat with no swollen thoght in hire corage
Cam at his heste, and on hir knees hire sette,
And reverently and wisely she hym grette.

937 *kan* (2) *om.*

"Grisilde," quod he, "my wyl is outrely
This mayden, that shal wedded been to me,
Received be to morwe as roially
As it possible is in myn hous to be;
And eek that every wight in his degree
Have his estaat in sittyng and servyse
And heigh plesaunce, as I kan best devyse.

I have no wommen, suffisaunt, certayn,
The chambres for tarraye in ordinaunce
After my lust, and therfore wolde I fayn
That thyn were al swich manere governaunce;
Thou knowest eek of old al my plesaunce,
Thogh thyn array be badde and yvel biseye,
Do thou thy devoir at the leeste weye."

"Nat oonly lord, that I am glad," quod she,
"To doon your lust, but I desire also
Yow for to serve and plese in my degree
With outen feyntyng, and shal everemo.
Ne nevere, for no wele ne no wo,
Ne shal the goost withinne myn herte stente
To love yow best with al my trewe entente."

And with that word she gan the hous to dighte,
And tables for to sette, and beddes make,
And peyned hir to doon al that she myghte,
Preyynge the chambereres for Goddes sake
To hasten hem, and faste swepe and shake,
And she, the mooste servysable of alle,
Hath every chambre arrayed, and his halle.

Abouten undren gan this Erl alighte,
That with hym broghte thise noble children tweye,
For which the peple ran to seen the sighte
Of hir array, so richely biseye;

And thanne at erst amonges hem they seye,
That Walter was no fool, thogh that hym leste
To chaunge his wyf, for it was for the beste.

"For she is fairer," as they deemen alle,
"Than is Grisilde, and moore tendre of age,
And fairer fruyt bitwene hem sholde falle,
And moore plesant for hir heigh lynage."
Hir brother eek so faire was of visage,
That hem to seen the peple hath caught plesaunce,
Commendynge now the markys governaunce.

O stormy peple, unsad and evere untrewe!
Ay undiscreet and chaungynge as a vane,
Delitynge evere in rumbul that is newe;
For lyk the moone ay wexe ye and wane,
Ay ful of clappyng, deere ynogh a jane,
Youre doom is fals, youre constance yvele preeveth,
A ful greet fool is he that on yow leeveth!

Thus seyden sadde folk in that citee,
Whan that the peple gazed up and doun,
For they were glad right for the noveltee
To han a newe lady of hir toun.
Namoore of this make I now mencioun,
But to Grisilde agayn wol I me dresse,
And telle hir constance and hir bisynesse.

Ful bisy was Grisilde in every thyng
That to the feeste was apertinent.
Right noght was she abayst of hir clothyng,
Thogh it were rude and somdeel eek torent,
But with glad cheere to the yate is went
With oother folk to greete the markysesse,
And after that dooth forth hir bisynesse.

1013 is she.

With so glad chiere hise gestes she receyveth,
And konnyngly everich in his degree,
That no defaute no man aperceyveth,
But ay they wondren what she myghte bee
That in so povre array was for to see,
And koude swich honour and reverence;
And worthily they preisen hire prudence.

In al this meenewhile she ne stente
This mayde and eek hir brother to commende
With al hir herte, in ful benyngne entente,
So wel that no man koude hir pris amende,
But atte laste, whan that thise lordes wende
To sitten doun to mete, he gan to calle
Grisilde, as she was bisy in his halle.

"Grisilde," quod he, as it were in his pley,
"How liketh thee my wyf and hir beautee?"
"Right wel," quod she, "my lord, for in good fey
A fairer saugh I nevere noon than she.
I prey to God yeve hir prosperitee,
And so hope I that he wol to yow sende
Plesance ynogh unto youre lyves ende.

O thyng biseke I yow, and warne also
That ye ne prikke with no tormentynge
This tendre mayden, as ye han doon mo;
For she is fostred in hir norissynge
Moore tendrely, and to my supposynge
She koude nat adversitee endure,
As koude a povre fostred creature."

And whan this Walter saugh hir pacience,
Hir glade chiere, and no malice at al,
And he so ofte had doon to hir offence

1017 and so. 1045 glad. 1046 *offence om.*

And she ay sad and constant as a wal,
Continuynge evere hir innocence overal,
This sturdy markys gan his herte dresse
To rewen upon hir wyfly stedfastnesse.

"This is ynogh, Grisilde myn," quod he,
"Be now namoore agast, ne yvele apayed.
I have thy feith and thy benyngnytee
As wel as evere womman was, assayed
In greet estaat, and povreliche arrayed;
Now knowe I, goode wyf, thy stedfastnesse!"
And hir in armes took, and gan hir kesse.

And she for wonder took of it no keep.
She herde nat, what thyng he to hir seyde.
She ferde as she had stert out of a sleep,
Til she out of hire mazednesse abreyde.
"Grisilde," quod he, "by God that for us deyde,
Thou art my wyf, ne noon oother I have,
Ne nevere hadde, as God my soule save.

This is thy doghter which thou hast supposed
To be my wyf; that oother feithfully
Shal be myn heir, as I have ay purposed;
Thou bare hym in thy body trewely.
At Boloigne have I kept hem prively.
Taak hem agayn, for now maystow nat seye
That thou hast lorn noon of thy children tweye.

And folk that ootherweys han seyd of me,
I warne hem wel that I have doon this deede
For no malice, ne for no crueltee,
But for tassaye in thee thy wommanheede,
And not to sleen my children, God forbeede!
But for to kepe hem pryvely and stille,
Til I thy purpos knewe and al thy wille."

1063 *ne om.* 1067 supposed.

Whan she this herde, aswowne doun she falleth
For pitous joye, and after hir swownynge
She bothe hir yonge children unto hir calleth,
And in hir armes pitously wepynge
Embraceth hem, and tendrely kissynge
Ful lyk a mooder, with hir salte teeres
She bathed bothe hir visage and hir heeres.

O, which a pitous thyng it was to se
Hir swownyng, and hir humble voys to heere!
"Grauntmercy, lord, that thanke I yow," quod she,
"That ye han saved me my children deere.
Now rekke I nevere to been deed right heere.
Sith I stonde in your love and in your grace,
No fors of deeth, ne whan my spirit pace!

O tendre, O deere, O yonge children myne!
Your woful mooder wende stedfastly
That crueel houndes, or som foul vermyne
Hadde eten yow; but God of his mercy
And youre benyngne fader tendrely
Hath doon yow kept," and in that same stounde
Al sodeynly she swapte adoun to grounde.

And in hir swough so sadly holdeth she
Hir children two, whan she gan hem tembrace,
That with greet sleighte and greet difficultee
The children from hir arm they gonne arace.
O many a teere on many a pitous face
Doun ran, of hem that stooden hir bisyde;
Unnethe abouten hir myghte they abyde.

Walter hir gladeth, and hir sorwe slaketh,
She riseth up abaysed from hir traunce,
And every wight hir joye and feeste maketh,
Til she hath caught agayn hir contenaunce.

Walter hir dooth so feithfully plesaunce,
That it was deyntee for to seen the cheere
Bitwixe hem two, now they been met yfeere.

Thise ladyes, whan that they hir tyme say,
Han taken hir and into chambre gon,
And strepen hir out of hir rude array
And in a clooth of gold that brighte shoon,
With a coroune of many a riche stoon
Upon hir heed, they into halle hir broghte,
And ther she was honured as hir oghte.

Thus hath this pitous day a blisful ende,
For every man and womman dooth his myght
This day in murthe and revel to dispende,
Til on the welkne shoon the sterres lyght.
For moore solempne in every mannes syght
This feste was, and gretter of costage,
Than was the revel of hire mariage.

Ful many a yeer in heigh prosperitee
Lyven thise two in concord and in reste.
And richely his doghter maryed he
Unto a lord, oon of the worthieste
Of al Ytaille, and thanne in pees and reste
His wyves fader in his court he kepeth,
Til that the soule out of his body crepeth.

His sone succedeth in his heritage
In reste and pees, after his fader day,
And fortunat was eek in mariage—
Al putte he nat his wyf in greet assay;
This world is nat so strong, it is no nay,
As it hath been of olde tymes yoore.
And herkneth what this auctour seith therfoore.

This storie is seyd, nat for that wyves sholde
Folwen Grisilde as in humylitee,
For it were inportable though they wolde,
But for that every wight in his degree
Sholde be constant in adversitee
As was Grisilde. Therfore Petrark writeth
This storie, which with heigh stile he enditeth.

For sith a womman was so pacient
Unto a mortal man, wel moore us oghte
Receyven al in gree that God us sent.
For greet skile is, he preeve that he wroghte.
But he ne tempteth no man that he boghte,
As seith Seint Jame, if ye his pistel rede;
He preeveth folk al day, it is no drede,

And suffreth us, as for oure excercise,
With sharpe scourges of adversitee
Ful ofte to be bete in sondry wise,
Nat for to knowe oure wyl, for certes he
Er we were born knew al oure freletee,
And for oure beste is al his governaunce.
Lat us thanne lyve in vertuous suffraunce.

But o word, lordynges, herkneth er I go,
It were ful hard to fynde nowadayes
In al a toun Grisildis thre or two,
For if that they were put to swiche assayes,
The gold of hem hath now so badde alayes
With bras, that thogh the coyne be fair at eye,
It wolde rather breste atwo than plye.

For which, heere for the Wyves love of Bathe,
Whos lyf and al hir secte God mayntene
In heigh maistrie, and elles were it scathe,

1160 *al om.*

I wol with lusty herte fressh and grene
Seyn yow a song, to glade yow, I wene,
And lat us stynte of ernestful matere.
Herkneth my song, that seith in this manere.

Lenvoy de Chaucer.

Grisilde is deed, and eek hir pacience,
And bothe atones buryed in Ytaille,
For which I crie in open audience
No wedded man so hardy be tassaille
His wyves pacience, in hope to fynde
Grisildis, for in certein he shal faille.

O noble wyves, ful of heigh prudence,
Lat noon humylitee youre tonge naille,
Ne lat no clerk have cause or diligence
To write of yow a storie of swich mervaille
As of Grisildis, pacient and kynde,
Lest Chichivache yow swelwe in hire entraille.

Folweth Ekko, that holdeth no silence,
But evere answereth at the countretaille;
Beth nat bidaffed for youre innocence,
But sharply taak on yow the governaille.
Emprenteth wel this lessoun in youre mynde
For commune profit, sith it may availle.

Ye archiwyves, stondeth at defense,
Syn ye be strong as it a greet camaille.
Ne suffreth nat that men yow doon offense,
And sklendre wyves, fieble as in bataille,
Beth egre as is a tygre yond in Ynde,
Ay clappeth as a mille, I yow consaille.

Ne dreed hem nat, doth hem no reverence,
For though thyn housbonde armed be in maille,
The arwes of thy crabbed eloquence
Shal perce his brest and eek his aventaille.
In jalousie I rede eek thou hym bynde,
And thou shalt make hym couche as doth a quaille.

If thou be fair, ther folk been in presence
Shewe thou thy visage and thyn apparaille;
If thou be foul, be fre of thy dispence,
To gete thee freendes ay do thy travaille,
Be ay of chiere as light as leef on lynde,
And lat hym care, and wepe, and wryng, and waille.

Here endeth the Clerk of Oxenford his Tale.

Bihoold the murye wordes of the Hoost.

This worthy clerk, whan ended was his tale,
Oure hoost seyde, and swoor by goddes bones,
"Me were levere than a barel ale
My wyf at hoom had herd this legende ones;
This is a gentil tale for the nones,
As to my purpos, wiste ye my wille,—
But thyng that wol nat be, lat it be stille."

Heere endeth the tale of the Clerk of Oxenford.

[This stanza, perhaps made up by a scribe from other lines in Chaucer, is inserted in Ellesmere MS. and elsewhere as a link between the Clerk's Tale and the Envoy, ascribed to Chaucer. The Envoy, however, belongs to the Clerk, and the stanza seems both spurious and unnecessary.]

THE PROLOGUE OF THE MARCHANTES TALE

The Prologe of the Marchantes tale.

"Wepyng and waylyng, care and oother sorwe,
I knowe ynogh, on even and a morwe,"
Quod the Marchant, "and so doon othere mo
That wedded been, I trowe that it be so.
For wel I woot, it fareth so with me.
I have a wyf, the worste that may be,
For thogh the feend to hire ycoupled were,
She wolde hym overmacche, I dar wel swere.
What sholde I yow reherce in special
Hir hye malice? She is a shrewe at al!
Ther is a long and large difference
Bitwix Grisildis grete pacience
And of my wyf the passyng crueltee.
Were I unbounden, al so moot I thee,
I wolde nevere eft comen in the snare.
We wedded men lyve in sorwe and care;
Assaye who so wole, and he shal fynde
I seye sooth, by seint Thomas of Ynde—
As for the moore part, I sey nat alle;
God shilde, that it sholde so bifalle!
A, goode Sir Hoost, I have ywedded bee
Thise monthes two, and moore nat, pardee;
And yet I trowe, he that al his lyve
Wyflees hath been, though that men wolde him ryve
Unto the herte, ne koude in no manere
Tellen so muchel sorwe as I now heere
Koude tellen of my wyves cursednesse!"
Now quod our hoost, "Marchant, so God yow blesse,

Syn ye so muchel knowen of that art,
Ful hertely I pray yow telle us part."
"Gladly," quod he, "but of myn owene soore,
For soory herte I telle may namoore."

THE TALE.

[January, a rich old dotard, who has married May, in spite of his friends' objections to the inequality of their ages, is deceived by her and his young squire Damian, although Pluto in pity restores his lost sight.]

EPILOGUE

The Prologe of the Squieres tale.

"Ey, Goddes mercy!" seyde oure Hooste tho,
"Now swich a wyf I pray God kepe me fro!
Lo, whiche sleightes and subtilitees
In wommen been, for ay as bisy as bees
Been they us sely men for to deceyve;
And from a sooth evere wol they weyve,
By this Marchauntes tale it preveth weel.
But doutelees, as trewe as any steel,
I have a wyf, though that she povre be,
But of hir tonge a labbyng shrewe is she.
And yet she hath an heep of vices mo—
Ther-of no fors, lat alle swiche thynges go.
But wyte ye what, in conseil be it seyd,
Me reweth soore I am unto hire teyd;
For and I sholde rekenen every vice,
Which that she hath, ywis, I were to nyce.
And cause why? it sholde reported be,
And toold to hir of somme of this meynee;
Of whom, it nedeth nat for to declare,
Syn wommen konnen outen swich chaffare.
And eek my wit suffiseth nat therto,
To tellen al, wherfore my tale is do."

GROUP F.

PROLOGUE TO THE SQUIERES TALE

Squier, come neer, if it your wille be,
And sey somwhat of love, for certes, ye
Konnen theron as muche as any man."
"Nay sir," quod he, "but I wol seye as I kan,
With hertly wyl, for I wol nat rebelle
Agayn your lust. A tale wol I telle,
Have me excused if I speke amys;
My wyl is good, and lo, my tale is this."

THE SQUIERES TALE

Heere bigynneth the Squieres Tale.

At Sarray, in the land of Tartarye,
Ther dwelte a kyng, that werreyed Russye,
Thurgh which ther dyde many a doughty man.
This noble kyng was cleped Cambynskan,
Which in his tyme was of so greet renoun,
That ther was nowher in no regioun
So excellent a lord in alle thyng.
Hym lakked noght that longeth to a kyng;
And of the secte, of which that he was born,
He kepte his lay, to which that he was sworn;
And therto he was hardy, wys, and riche,
Pitous, and just, and everemoore yliche.
Sooth of his word, benigne, and honurable,
Of his corage as any centre stable,
Yong, fressh, strong, and in armes desirous
As any bacheler of al his hous.
A fair persone he was, and fortunat,
And kepte alwey so wel roial estat
That ther was nowher swich another man.
This noble kyng, this Tartre Cambynskan,
Hadde two sones on Elpheta his wyf,
Of whiche the eldeste highte Algarsyf,
That oother sone was cleped Cambalo.
A doghter hadde this worthy kyng also,
That yongest was, and highte Canacee.
But for to telle yow al hir beautee,
It lyth nat in my tonge nyn my konnyng.
I dar nat undertake so heigh a thyng;
Myn Englissh eek is insufficient.
I moste been a rethor excellent,

20 and pitous; *and everemoore* alwey.

That koude hise colours longynge for that art,
If he sholde hir discryven every part.
I am noon swich; I moot speke as I kan.
And so bifel, that whan this Cambynskan
Hath twenty wynter born his diademe,
As he was wont fro yeer to yeer, I deme,
He leet the feeste of his nativitee
Doon cryen thurghout Sarray his citee,
The last Idus of March after the yeer.
Phebus the sonne ful joly was and cleer,
For he was neigh his exaltacioun
In Martes face, and in his mansioun
In Aries, the colerik hoote signe.
Ful lusty was the weder, and benigne,
For which the foweles agayn the sonne sheene,
What for the sesoun and the yonge grene,
Ful loude songen hir affeccioun̄s;
Hem semed han geten hem proteccioun̄s
Agayn the swerd of wynter, keene and coold.
This Cambynskan, of which I have yow toold,
In roial vestiment sit on his deys,
With diademe, ful heighe in his paleys,
And halt his feeste so solempne and so ryche,
That in this world ne was ther noon it lyche.
Of which, if I shal tellen al tharray,
Thanne wolde it occupie a someres day,
And eek it nedeth nat for to devyse,
At every cours, the ordre of hire servyse.
I wol nat tellen of hir strange sewes,
Ne of hir swannes, nor of hire heronsewes;
Eek in that lond, as tellen knyghtes olde,
Ther is som mete that is ful deynte holde,
That in this lond men recche of it but smal—
Ther nys no man that may reporten al.
I wol nat taryen yow, for it is pryme,

46 thurgh. 62 *ne om.*

And for it is no fruyt but los of tyme.
Unto my firste I wole have my recours.
And so bifel, that after the thridde cours
Whil that this kyng sit thus in his nobleye,
Herknynge hise mynstrals hir thynges pleye
Biforn hym at the bord deliciously,
In at the halle dore al sodeynly
Ther cam a knyght, upon a steede of bras,
And in his hand a brood mirour of glas,
Upon his thombe he hadde of gold a ryng,
And by his syde a naked swerd hangyng.
And up he rideth to the heighe bord.
In al the hall ne was ther spoken a word
For merveille of this knyght; hym to biholde
Ful bisily ther wayten yonge and olde.
This strange knyght, that cam thus sodeynly
Al armed, save his heed, ful richely,
Saleweth kyng, and queene, and lordes alle,
By ordre, as they seten in the halle,
With so heigh reverence and obeisaunce,
As wel in speche as in contenaunce,
That Gawayn, with his olde curteisye,
Though he were comen ayeyn out of Fairye,
Ne koude hym nat amende with a word.
And after this, biforn the heighe bord
He with a manly voys seith his message,
After the forme used in his langage,
Withouten vice of silable or of lettre.
And for his tale sholde seme the bettre,
Accordant to hise wordes was his cheere,
As techeth art of speche hem that it leere.
Al be it that I kan nat sowne his stile,
Ne kan nat clymben over so heigh a style,
Yet seye I this, as to commune entente,
Thus muche amounteth al that evere he mente,

105 *it om.*

If it so be that I have it in mynde.
He seyde, "The kyng of Arabe and of Inde,
My lige lord, on this solempne day
Saleweth yow, as he best kan and may;
And sendeth yow, in honour of your feeste,
By me, that am al redy at your heeste,
This steede of bras, that esily and weel
Kan in the space of o day natureel,
This is to seyn, in foure and twenty houres,
Wherso yow lyst, in droghte or elles shoures,
Beren youre body into every place
To which youre herte wilneth for to pace,
Withouten wem of yow, thurgh foul or fair.
Or if yow lyst to fleen as hye in the air
As dooth an egle, whan that hym list to soore,
This same steede shal bere yow evere moore
Withouten harm, til ye be ther yow leste,
Though that ye slepen on his bak or reste;
And turne ayeyn, with writhyng of a pyn.
He that it wroghte, koude ful many a gyn;
He wayted many a constellacioun
Er he had doon this operacioun;
And knew ful many a seel, and many a bond.
This mirrour eek, that I have in myn hond,
Hath swich a myght, that men may in it see
Whan ther shal fallen any adversitee
Unto your regne, or to yourself also,
And openly who is your freend, or foo.
And over al this, if any lady bright
Hath set hir herte in any maner wight,
If he be fals, she shal his tresoun see,
His newe love, and al his subtiltee
So openly, that ther shal no thyng hyde.
Wherfore, ageyn this lusty someres tyde,
This mirour and this ryng that ye may see,
He hath sent unto my lady Canacee,

Your excellente doghter that is heere.
The vertu of the ryng, if ye wol heere,
Is this, that if hir lust it for to were
Upon hir thombe, or in hir purs it bere,
Ther is no fowel that fleeth under the hevene
That she ne shal wel understonde his stevene,
And knowe his menyng openly and pleyn,
And answere hym in his langage ageyn.
And every gras that groweth upon roote,
She shal eek knowe, and whom it wol do boote,
Al be hise woundes never so depe and wyde.
This naked swerd, that hangeth by my syde
Swich vertu hath, that what man so ye smyte
Thurghout his armure it wole hym kerve and byte,
Were it as thikke as is a branched ook.
And what man that is wounded with a strook
Shal never be hool, til that yow list of grace
To stroke hym with the plate in thilke place
Ther he is hurt; this is as muche to seyn,
Ye moote with the plate swerd ageyn
Strike hym in the wounde, and it wol close.
This is a verray sooth withouten glose.
It failleth nat, whils it is in youre hoold."
And whan this knyght hath thus his tale toold,
He rideth out of halle, and doun he lighte.
His steede, which that shoon as sonne brighte,
Stant in the court, as stille as any stoon.
This knyght is to his chambre lad anoon,
And is unarmed and unto mete yset.
The presentes been ful roially yfet,
This is to seyn, the swerd and the mirour,
And born anon into the heighe tour
With certeine officers ordeyned therfore.
And unto Canacee this ryng was bore,
Solempnely, ther she sit at the table.

162 *thilke* that. 164 plat. 171 *as* (1) *om.*

But sikerly, withouten any fable,
The hors of bras, that may nat be remewed,
It stant as it were to the ground yglewed.
Ther may no man out of the place it dryve,
For noon engyn of wyndas ne polyve;
And cause why, for they kan nat the craft,
And therfore in the place they han it laft,
Til that the knyght hath taught hem the manere
To voyden hym, as ye shal after heere.
Greet was the prees that swarmeth to and fro
To gauren on this hors, that stondeth so.
For it so heigh was, and so brood, and long,
So wel proporcioned for to been strong,
Right as it were a steede of Lumbardye;
Therwith so horsly and so quyk of eye,
As it a gentil Poilleys courser were.
For certes, fro his tayl unto his ere,
Nature ne art ne koude hym nat amende
In no degree, as al the peple wende.
But everemoore hir mooste wonder was
How that it koude go, and was of bras.
It was a fairye, as al the peple semed.
Diverse folk diversely they demed;
As many heddes, as manye wittes ther been.
They murmureden as dooth a swarm of been,
And maden skiles after hir fantasies,
Rehersynge of thise olde poetries,
And seyde that it was lyk the Pegasee,
The hors that hadde wynges for to flee;
Or elles, it was the Grekes hors Synoun,
That broghte Troie to destruccioun,
As men in thise olde geestes rede.
"Myn herte," quod oon, "is everemoore in drede.
I trowe som men of armes been therinne,
That shapen hem this citee for to wynne.
It were right good that al swich thyng were knowe."

Another rowned to his felawe lowe,
And seyde, "He lyeth; it is rather lyk
An apparence ymaad by som magyk,
As jogelours pleyen at thise feestes grete."
Of sondry doutes thus they jangle and trete,
As lewed peple demeth comunly
Of thynges that been maad moore subtilly
Than they kan in hir lewednesse comprehende;
They demen gladly to the badder ende.
And somme of hem wondred on the mirour
That born was up into the maister tour—
How men myghte in it swiche thynges se.
Another answerde, and seyde, "It myghte wel be
Naturelly by composiciouns
Of anglis and of slye reflexiouns;"
And seyden, that in Rome was swich oon.
They speken of Alocen and Vitulon,
And Aristotle, that writen in hir lyves
Of queynte mirours and of perspectives,
As knowen they that han hir bookes herd.
And oother folk han wondred on the swerd,
That wolde percen thurgh out every thyng;
And fille in speche of Thelophus the kyng
And of Achilles with his queynte spere,
For he koude with it bothe heele and dere,
Right in swich wise as men may with the swerd,
Of which right now ye han yourselven herd.
They speken of sondry hardyng of metal,
And speke of medicynes therwithal,
And how and whanne it sholde yharded be,
Which is unknowe, algates unto me.
Tho speeke they of Canacees ryng,
And seyden alle, that swich a wonder thyng
Of craft of rynges herde they nevere noon;
Save that he Moyses, and kyng Salomon

226 *maister* hye

Hadde a name of konnyng in swich art.
Thus seyn the peple, and drawen hem apart.
But nathelees, somme seiden that it was
Wonder to maken of fern asshen glas,
And yet nys glas nat lyk asshen of fern;
But for they han knowen it so fern,
Therfore cesseth hir janglyng and hir wonder.
As soore wondren somme on cause of thonder,
On ebbe, on flood, on gossomer, and on myst,
And alle thyng, til that the cause is wyst.
Thus jangle they, and demen, and devyse,
Til that the kyng gan fro the bord aryse.
  Phebus hath laft the angle meridional,
And yet ascendynge was the beest roial,
The gentil Leoun, with his Aldrian,
Whan that this Tartre kyng, this Cambynskan
Roos fro his bord, ther that he sat ful hye.
Toforn hym gooth the loude mynstralcye
Til he cam to his chambre of parementz,
Ther as they sownen diverse intrumentz
That it is lyk an hevene for to heere.
Now dauncen lusty Venus children deere,
For in the Fyssh hir lady sat ful hye,
And looketh on hem with a freendly eye.
This noble kyng is set up in his trone;
This strange knyght is fet to hym ful soone,
And on the daunce he gooth with Canacee.
Heere is the revel and the jolitee
That is nat able a dul man to devyse;
He moste han knowen love and his servyse,
And been a feestlych man as fressh as May,
That sholde yow devysen swich array.
Who koude telle yow the forme of daunces,
So unkouthe and so fresshe contenaunces,
Swich subtil lookyng and dissymulynges,

260 And on. 266 *this* (2) *om.*

For drede of jalouse mennes aperceyvynges?
No man but Launcelet, and he is deed.
Therfore I passe of al this lustiheed;
I sey namoore, but in this jolynesse
I lete hem, til men to the soper dresse.
The styward bit the spices for to hye,
And eek the wyn, in al this melodye;
The usshers and the squiers been ygoon,
The spices and the wyn is come anoon,
They ete and drynke, and whan this hadde an ende,
Unto the temple, as reson was, they wende.
The service doon, they soupen al by day;
What nedeth me rehercen hir array?
Ech man woot wel, that at a kynges feeste
Hath plentee, to the mooste and to the leeste,
And deyntees mo than been in my knowyng.
At after soper gooth this noble kyng,
To seen this hors of bras, with al the route
Of lordes, and of ladyes hym aboute.
Swich wondryng was ther on this hors of bras,
That syn the grete sege of Troie was,
Ther as men wondreden on an hors also,
Ne was ther swich a wondryng as was tho.
But fynally, the kyng axeth this knyght
The vertu of this courser, and the myght;
And preyde hym to telle his governaunce.
This hors anoon bigan to trippe and daunce,
Whan that this knyght leyde hand upon his reyne,
And seyde, "Sire, ther is namoore to seyne,
But whan yow list to ryden any where,
Ye mooten trille a pyn, stant in his ere,
Which I shal telle yow bitwix us two.
Ye moote nempne hym to what place also,
Or to what contree, that yow list to ryde,
And whan ye come ther as yow list abyde,

291 *the om.* 299 *at om.* 317 yow telle.

Bidde hym descende, and trille another pyn,
(For therin lith theffect of al the gyn)
And he wol doun descende, and doon youre wille.
And in that place he wol stonde stille,
Though al the world the contrarie hadde yswore;
He shal nat thennes been ydrawe ne ybore.
Or, if yow liste, bidde hym thennes goon,
Trille this pyn, and he wol vanysshe anoon
Out of the sighte of every maner wight,
And come agayn, be it day or nyght,
Whan that yow list to clepen hym ageyn,
In swich a gyse as I shal to yow seyn,
Bitwixe yow and me, and that ful soone.
Ride whan yow list; ther is namoore to doone."
Enformed whan the kyng was of that knyght,
And hath conceyved in his wit aright
The manere and the forme of al this thyng,
Thus glad and blithe this noble doughty kyng
Repeireth to his revel as biforn.
The brydel is unto the tour yborn,
And kept among hise jueles, leeve and deere.
The hors vanysshed, I noot in what manere,
Out of hir sighte; ye gete namoore of me.
But thus I lete in lust and jolitee
This Cambynskan, hise lordes festeiynge,
Til wel ny the day bigan to sprynge.

Explicit prima pars.

Sequitur pars secunda.

The norice of digestioun, the sleepe,
Gan on hem wynke, and bad hem taken keepe,
That muchel drynke and labour wolde han reste;
And with a galpyng mouth hem alle he keste,

322 *in om.* 326 nor. 327 list. 338 *doughty om.*

And seyde, "It was tyme to lye adoun,
For blood was in his domynacioun.
Cherisseth blood, natures freend," quod he.
They thanken hym, galpynge, by two, by thre,
And every wight gan drawe hym to his reste,
As sleep hem bad; they tooke it for the beste.
Hir dremes shul nat been ytoold for me;
Ful were hir heddes of fumositee,
That causeth dreem, of which ther nys no charge.
They slepen til that it was pryme large,
The mooste part, but it were Canacee;
She was ful mesurable, as wommen be.
For of hir fader hadde she take leve
To goon to reste, soone after it was eve.
Hir liste nat appalled for to be,
Ne on the morwe unfeestlich for to se:
And slepte hir firste sleepe, and thanne awook;
For swich a joye she in hir herte took,
Bothe of hir queynte ryng and hire mirour,
That twenty tyme she changed hir colour,
And in hir sleep right for impressioun
Of hir mirour she hadde a visioun.
Wherfore, er that the sonne gan up glyde,
She cleped on hir maistresse, hir bisyde,
And seyde, that hir liste for to ryse.
Thise olde wommen that been gladly wyse,
As hir maistresse answerde hir anon,
And seyde, "Madame, whider wil ye goon
Thus erly, for the folk been alle on reste?"
"I wol," quod she, "arise, for me leste
No lenger for to slepe; and walke aboute."
Hir maistresse clepeth wommen a greet route,
And up they rysen wel an ten or twelve.
Up riseth fresshe Canacee hirselve,
As rody and bright as dooth the yonge sonne,
That in the Ram is foure degrees upronne,

Noon hyer was he, whan she redy was;
And forth she walketh esily a pas,
Arrayed after the lusty sesoun soote,
Lightly for to pleye and walke on foote,
Nat but with fyve or sixe of hir meynee;
And in a trench forth in the park gooth she.
The vapour, which that fro the erthe glood,
Made the sonne to seme rody and brood;
But nathelees, it was so fair a sighte
That it made alle hir hertes for to lighte,
What for the sesoun and the morwenynge,
And for the foweles that she herde synge;
For right anon she wiste what they mente
Right by hir song, and knew al hir entente.
The knotte, why that every tale is toold,
If it be taried til that lust be coold
Of hem that han it after herkned yoore,
The savour passeth ever lenger the moore,
For fulsomnesse of his prolixitee;
And by the same resoun thynketh me,
I sholde to the knotte condescende,
And maken of hir walkyng soone an ende.
Amydde a tree fordryed, as whit as chalk,
As Canacee was pleyyng in hir walk,
Ther sat a faucon over hir heed ful hye,
That with a pitous voys so gan to crye
That all the wode resouned of hir cry.
Ybeten hath she hirself so pitously
With bothe hir wynges, til the rede blood
Ran endelong the tree ther as she stood,
And evere in oon she cryde alwey and shrighte,
And with hir beek hirselven so she prighte,
That ther nys tygre, ne noon so crueel beest
That dwelleth outher in wode or in forest
That nolde han wept, if that he wepe koude

416 *as om.* 421 *he* she.

For sorwe of hir, she shrighte alwey so loude.
For ther nas nevere yet no man on lyve
(If that I koude a faucon wel discryve),
That herde of swich another of fairnesse,
As wel of plumage as of gentillesse
Of shape and al that myghte yrekened be.
A faucon peregryn thanne semed she
Of fremde land, and everemoore as she stood
She swowneth now and now for lakke of blood,
Til wel neigh is she fallen fro the tree.
This faire kynges doghter Canacee,
That on hir fynger baar the queynte ryng,
Thurgh which she understood wel every thyng
That any fowel may in his leden seyn,
And koude answeren hym in his ledene ageyn
Hath understonde what this faucoun seyde,
And wel neigh for the routhe almoost she deyde.
And to the tree she gooth ful hastily,
And on this faukoun looketh pitously,
And heeld hir lappe abrood, for wel she wiste
The faukon moste fallen fro the twiste,
Whan that it swowned next, for lakke of blood.
A longe while to wayten hir she stood,
Til atte laste she spak in this manere
Unto the hauk, as ye shal after heere.
"What is the cause, if it be for to telle,
That ye be in this furial pyne of helle?"
Quod Canacee unto the hauk above,
"Is this for sorwe of deeth, or los of love?
For, as I trowe, thise been causes two
That causeth moost a gentil herte wo.
Of oother harm it nedeth nat to speke,
For ye yourself upon yourself yow wreke,
Which proveth wel, that outher love or drede
Moot been enchesoun of your cruel dede,

423 man yet.

Syn that I see noon oother wight yow chace.
For love of God as dooth yourselven grace,
Or what may been your helpe? for west nor est
Ne saugh I nevere er now no bryd ne beest
That ferde with hymself so pitously.
Ye sle me with your sorwe, verraily,
I have of yow so greet compassioun.
For Goddes love com fro the tree adoun,
And as I am a kynges doghter trewe,
If that I verraily the cause knewe
Of your disese, if it lay in my myght
I wolde amenden it er that it were nyght,
As wisly helpe me, grete god of kynde!
And herbes shal I right ynowe yfynde,
To heele with youre hurtes hastily."
Tho shrighte this faucoun moore yet pitously
Than ever she dide, and fil to grounde anon
And lith aswowne, deed, and lyk a stoon,
Til Canacee hath in hir lappe hir take
Unto the tyme she gan of swough awake.
And after that she of hir swough gan breyde,
Right in hir haukes ledene thus she seyde:
"That pitee renneth soone in gentil herte,
Feelynge his similitude in peynes smerte,
Is preved al day, as men may it see,
As wel by werk as by auctoritee.
For gentil herte kitheth gentillesse.
I se wel, that ye han of my distresse
Compassioun, my faire Canacee,
Of verray wommanly benignytee
That nature in youre principles hath set.
But for noon hope for to fare the bet,
But for to obeye unto youre herte free,
And for to maken othere be war by me,
As by the whelp chasted is the leoun,

463 passioun. 469 the grete. 481 *it om.* 487 yset. 489 *to om.*

Right for that cause and for that conclusioun
Whil that I have a leyser and a space,
Myn harm I wol confessen, er I pace."
And evere whil that oon hir sorwe tolde,
That oother weep, as she to water wolde,
Til that the faucoun bad hire to be stille;
And with a syk right thus she seyde hir wille.
"Ther I was bred, allas, that harde day!
And fostred in a roche of marbul gray
So tendrely, that no thyng eyled me;
I nyste nat what was adversitee,
Til I koude flee ful hye under the sky.
Tho dwelte a tercelet me faste by
That semed welle of alle gentillesse,
Al were he ful of tresoun and falsnesse;
It was so wrapped under humble cheere,
And under hewe of trouthe in swich manere,
Under plesance, and under bisy peyne,
That I ne koude han wend he koude feyne,
So depe in greyn he dyed his colours.
Right as a serpent hit hym vnder floures
Til he may seen his tyme for to byte,
Right so this god of love, this ypocryte,
Dooth so hise cerymonyes and obeisaunces,
And kepeth in semblant alle hise observaunces
That sowneth into gentillesse of love.
As in a toumbe is al the faire above,
And under is the corps swich as ye woot,
Swich was this ypocrite, bothe coold and hoot;
And in this wise he served his entente,
That—save the feend—noon wiste what he mente;
Til he so longe hadde wopen and compleyned,
And many a yeer his service to me feyned,
Til that myn herte, to pitous and to nyce,
Al innocent of his corouned malice,

499 *Ther* that. 520 the.

For-fered of his deeth, as thoughte me,
Upon hise othes and his seuretee,
Graunted hym love up this condicioun
That everemoore myn honour and renoun
Were saved, bothe privee and apert.
This is to seyn, that after his desert
I yaf hym al myn herte and al my thoght—
God woot and he, that ootherwise noght!—
And took his herte in chaunge for myn for ay.
But sooth is seyd, goon sithen many a day,
'A trewe wight and a theef thenken nat oon.'
And whan he saugh the thyng so fer ygoon,
That I hadde graunted hym fully my love,
In swich a gyse as I have seyd above,
And yeven hym my trewe herte, as free
As he swoor he his herte yaf to me,
Anon this tigre ful of doublenesse
Fil on hise knees, with so devout humblesse,
With so heigh reverence, and as by his cheere
So lyk a gentil lovere of manere,
So ravysshed, as it semed, for the joye,
That nevere Jason, ne Parys of Troye,
Jason? certes, ne noon oother man
Syn Lameth was, that alderfirst bigan
To loven two, as writen folk biforn,
Ne nevere syn the firste man was born,
Ne koude man, by twenty thousand part,
Countrefete the sophymes of his art;
Ne were worthy unbokelen his galoche,
Ther doublenesse or feynyng sholde approche,
Ne so koude thonke a wight as he dide me.
His manere was an hevene for to see
Til any womman, were she never so wys;
So peynted he and kembde at point-devys
As wel hise wordes as his contenaunce

529 upon. 533 *al* (2) *om.* 542 yaf his herte. 548 *Jason* Troilus.

And I so loved hym for his obeisaunce
And for the trouthe I demed in his herte,
That if so were that any thyng hym smerte,
Al were it never so lite, and I it wiste,
Me thoughte I felte deeth myn herte twiste.
And shortly so ferforth this thyng is went,
That my wyl was his willes instrument;
This is to seyn, my wyl obeyed his wyl
In alle thyng as fer as resoun fil,
Kepynge the boundes of my worship evere.
Ne nevere hadde I thyng so lief, ne levere,
As hym, God woot! ne nevere shal namo.
This lasteth lenger than a yeer or two,
That I supposed of hym noght but good.
But finally, thus atte laste it stood,
That Fortune wolde that he moste twynne
Out of that place, which that I was inne.
Wher me was wo that is no questioun;
I kan nat make of it discripsioun.
For o thyng dare I tellen boldely,
I knowe what is the peyne of deeth therby.
Swich harme I felte, for he ne myghte bileve;
So on a day of me he took his leve
So sorwefully eek, that I wende verraily,
That he had felt as muche harm as I,
Whan that I herde hym speke, and saugh his hewe.
But nathelees, I thoughte he was so trewe,
And eek that he repaire sholde ageyn
Withinne a litel while, sooth to seyn,
And resoun wolde eek that he moste go
For his honour, as ofte it happeth so,
That I made vertu of necessitee,
And took it wel, syn that it moste be.
As I best myghte, I hidde fro hym my sorwe,
And took hym by the hond, seint John to borwe,
And seyde hym thus, 'Lo I am youres al.

Beth swich as I to yow have been, and shal.'
What he answerde, it nedeth noght reherce,
Who kan sey bet than he? who kan do werse?
Whan he hath al wel seyd, thanne hath he doon;
'Therfore bihoveth hire a ful long spoon
That shal ete with a feend,' thus herde I seye.
So atte laste he moste forth his weye,
And forth he fleeth, til he cam ther hym leste.
Whan it cam hym to purpos for to reste,
I trowe he hadde thilke text in mynde
That 'alle thyng repeirynge to his kynde
Gladeth hymself;' thus seyn men, as I gesse.
Men loven of propre kynde newefangelnesse,
As briddes doon, that men in cages fede,
For though thou nyght and day take of hem hede,
And strawe hir cage faire and softe as silk,
And yeve hem sugre, hony, breed, and milk,
Yet right anon as that his dore is uppe,
He with his feet wol spurne adoun his cuppe,
And to the wode he wole and wormes ete;
So newefangel been they of hir mete.
And loven novelrie of propre kynde.
No gentillesse of blood ne may hem bynde.
  So ferde this tercelet, allas, the day!
Though he were gentil born, and fressh, and gay,
And goodlich for to seen, humble and free,
He saugh upon a tyme a kyte flee,
And sodeynly he loved this kyte so
That al his love is clene fro me ago,
And hath his trouthe falsed in this wyse.
Thus hath the kyte my love in hire servyse,
And I am lorn withouten remedie."
And with that word this faucoun gan to crie,
And swowned eft in Canacees barm.
  Greet was the sorwe for the haukes harm

601 *wel om.* 620 *ne om.* 622 *and* (1) *om.*

That Canacee and alle hir wommen made.
They nyste hou they myghte the faucoun glade;
But Canacee hom bereth hir in hir lappe,
And softely in plastres gan hir wrappe,
Ther as she with hir beek hadde hurt hirselve.
Now kan nat Canacee but herbes delve
Out of the ground, and make saves newe
Of herbes preciouse and fyne of hewe,
To heelen with this hauk; fro day to nyght
She dooth hir bisynesse and al hir myght.
And by hir beddes heed she made a mewe,
And covered it with veluettes blewe,
In signe of trouthe that is in wommen sene.
And al withoute, the mewe is peynted grene,
In which were ypeynted alle thise false fowles,
As beth thise tidyves, tercelettes, and owles,
Right for despit were peynted hem bisyde,
And pyes on hem for to crie and chyde.
Thus lete I Canacee hir hauk kepyng;
I wol namoore as now speke of hir ryng,
Til it come eft to purpos for to seyn
How that this faucoun gat hire love ageyn
Repentant, as the storie telleth us,
By mediacioun of Cambalus,
The kynges sone, of which that I yow tolde.
But hennesforth I wol my proces holde
To speken of aventures and of batailles,
That nevere yet was herd so grete mervailles.
First wol I telle yow of Cambynskan,
That in his tyme many a citee wan;
And after wol I speke of Algarsif,
How that he wan Theodora to his wif,
For whom ful ofte in greet peril he was,
Ne hadde he be holpen by the steede of bras;
And after wol I speke of Cambalo

641 *hauk om.* 642 *al hire* hire fulle. 647 ther were. 657 *that om.*

That faught in lystes with the bretheren two
For Canacee, er that he myghte hir wynne.
And ther I lefte, I wol ayeyn bigynne.

Explicit secunda pars.

Incipit pars tercia.

Appollo whirleth up his chaar so hye
Til that the god Mercurius hous, the slye—

670 An.

[*Unfinished.*]

PROLOGUE TO THE FRANKELEYNS TALE

Heere folwen the wordes of the Frankelyn to the Squier, and the wordes of the hoost to the Frankelyn.

"In feith, Squier, thow hast thee wel yquit,
And gentilly I preise wel thy wit,"
Quod the Frankeleyn, "considerynge thy yowthe,
So feelyngly thou spekest, sire, I allow the;
As to my doom, ther is noon that is heere
Of eloquence that shal be thy peere,
If that thou lyve—God yeve thee good chaunce,
And in vertu sende thee continuance!
For of thy speche I have greet deyntee;
I have a sone, and, by the Trinitee,
I hadde levere than twenty pound worth lond,
Though it right now were fallen in myn hond,
He were a man of swich discrecioun
As that yc been; fy on possessioun
But if a man be vertuous withal!
I have my sone snybbed, and yet shal,
For he to vertu listneth nat entende,
But for to pleye at dees, and to despende
And lese al that he hath, is his usage.
And he hath levere talken with a page
Than to comune with any gentil wight
There he myghte lerne gentillesse aright."
"Straw for youre gentillesse," quod our Hoost,
What, Frankeleyn, pardee! sire, wel thou woost
That ech of yow moot tellen atte leste
A tale or two, or breken his biheste."
"That knowe I wel, sire," quod the Frankeleyn,
"I prey yow, haveth me nat in desdeyn

Though to this man I speke a word or two."
"Telle on thy tale, withouten wordes mo."
"Glady, sire Hoost," quod he, "I wole obeye
Unto your wyl; now herkneth what I seye.
I wol yow nat contrarien in no wyse
As fer as that my wittes wol suffyse;
I prey to God that it may plesen yow,
Thanne woot I wel that it is good ynow."

THE FRANKELEYNS TALE

The Prologe of the Frankeleyns tale.

Thise olde gentil Britouns in hir dayes
Of diverse aventures maden layes,
Rymeyed in hir firste Briton tonge;
Whiche layes with hir instrumentz they songe,
Or elles redden hem, for hir plesaunce.
And oon of hem have I in remembraunce,
Which I shal seyn, with good-wyl, as I kan.
But sires, by cause I am a burel man,
At my bigynnyng first I yow biseche,
Have me excused of my rude speche.
I lerned nevere rethorik, certeyn;
Thyng that I speke, it moot be bare and pleyn.
I sleep nevere on the Mount of Pernaso,
Ne lerned Marcus Tullius Scithero.
Colours ne knowe I none, withouten drede,
But swiche colours as growen in the mede,
Or elles swiche, as men dye or peynte.
Colours of rethoryk been me to queynte,
My spirit feeleth noght of swich mateere;
But if yow list, my tale shul ye heere.

Heere bigynneth the Frankeleyns tale.

In Armorik, that called is Britayne,
Ther was a knyght that loved and dide his payne
To serve a lady in his beste wise;
And many a labour, many a greet emprise,
He for his lady wroghte, er she were wonne.

726 *me om.*

For she was oon the faireste under sonne,
And eek therto comen of so heigh kynrede
That wel unnethes dorste this knyght for drede
Telle hir his wo, his peyne, and his distresse.
But atte laste, she for his worthynesse,
And namely for his meke obeysaunce,
Hath swiche a pitee caught of his penaunce,
That pryvely she fil of his accord
To take hym for hir housbonde and hir lord—
Of swich lordshipe as men han over hir wyves—
And for to lede the moore in blisse hir lyves,
Of his free wyl he swoor hir as a knyght,
That nevere in al his lyf he, day ne nyght,
Ne sholde upon hym take no maistrie
Agayn hir wyl, ne kithe hir jalousie,
But hir obeye and folwe hir wyl in al
As any lovere to his lady shal;
Save that the name of soveraynetee,
That wolde he have, for shame of his degree.
She thanked hym, and with ful greet humblesse
She seyde, "Sire, sith of youre gentillesse
Ye profre me to have so large a reyne,
Ne wolde nevere God bitwixe us tweyne,
As in my gilt, were outher werre or stryf.
Sir, I wol be your humble trewe wyf,
Have heer my trouthe til that myn herte breste."
Thus been they bothe in quiete and in reste.
For o thyng, sires, saufly dar I seye,
That freendes everych oother moot obeye,
If they wol longe holden compaignye.
Love wol nat been constreyned by maistrye;
Whan maistrie comth, the God of Love anon
Beteth hise wynges, and farewel, he is gon!
Love is a thyng as any spirit free.
Wommen of kynde desiren libertee,
And nat to been constreyned as a thral—

And so doon men, if I sooth seyen shal.
Looke who that is moost pacient in love,
He is at his avantage al above.
Pacience is an heigh vertu, certeyn,
For it venquysseth, as thise clerkes seyn,
Thynges that rigour sholde nevere atteyne.
For every word men may nat chide or pleyne,
Lerneth to suffre, or elles, so moot I goon,
Ye shul it lerne, wherso ye wole or noon.
For in this world, certein, ther no wight is
That he ne dooth or seith som tyme amys.
Ire, siknesse, or constellacioun
Wyn, wo, or chaungynge of complexioun
Causeth ful ofte to doon amys or speken.
On every wrong a man may nat be wreken;
After the tyme moste be temperaunce
To every wight that kan on governaunce.
And therfore hath this wise worthy knyght,
To lyve in ese, suffrance hir bihight,
And she to hym ful wisly gan to swere
That nevere sholde ther be defaute in here.
Heere may men seen an humble wys accord!
Thus hath she take hir servant and hir lord,
Servant in love, and lord in mariage;
Thanne was he bothe in lordship and servage—
Servage? nay but in lordshipe above,
Sith he hath bothe his lady and his love—
His lady, certes, and his wyf also,
The which that lawe of love acordeth to.
  And whan he was in this prosperitee,
Hoom with his wyf he gooth to his contree,
Nat fer fro Pedmark, ther his dwellyng was,
Where as he lyveth in blisse and in solas.
Who koude telle, but he hadde wedded be,
The joye, the ese, and the prosperitee
That is bitwixe an housbonde and his wyf?

A yeer and moore lasted this blisful lyf,
Til that the knyght of which I speke of thus,
That of Kayrrud was cleped Arveragus,
Shoop hym to goon, and dwelle a yeer or tweyne,
In Engelond, that cleped was eek Briteyne,
To seke in armes worship and honour—
For al his lust he sette in swich labour—
And dwelled there two yeer, the book seith thus.
Now wol I stynten of this Arveragus
And speken I wole of Dorigene his wyf,
That loveth hir housbonde as hir hertes lyf.
For his absence wepeth she and siketh,
As doon thise noble wyves whan hem liketh.
She moorneth, waketh, wayleth, fasteth, pleyneth,
Desir of his presence hir so destreyneth,
That al this wyde world she sette at noght.
Hir freendes whiche that knewe hir hevy thoght,
Conforten hir in al that ever they may.
They prechen hir, they telle hir nyght and day
That causelees she sleeth hirself, allas!
And every confort possible in this cas
They doon to hir, with all hir bisynesse,
Al for to make hir leve hir hevynesse.
By proces, as ye knowen everichoon,
Men may so longe graven in a stoon,
Til som figure therinne emprented be.
So longe han they conforted hir, til she
Receyved hath by hope and by resoun
The emprentyng of hir consolacioun,
Thurgh which hir grete sorwe gan aswage;
She may nat alwey duren in swich rage.
And eek Arveragus, in al this care,
Hath sent hir lettres hoom of his welfare,
And that he wol come hastily agayn,
Or elles hadde this sorwe hir herte slayn.
Hir freendes sawe hir sorwe gan to slake,

And preyden hir on knees, for Goddes sake,
To come and romen hir in compaignye,
Awey to dryve hir derke fantasye.
And finally she graunted that requeste,
For wel she saugh that it was for the beste.
Now stood hir castel faste by the see;
And often with hir freendes walketh shee
Hir to disporte, upon the bank an heigh,
Where as she many a ship and barge seigh
Seillynge hir cours, where as hem liste go.
But thanne was that a parcel of hir wo,
For to hirself ful ofte "allas," seith she,
"Is ther no ship of so many as I se
Wol bryngen hom my lord? thanne were myn herte
Al warisshed of hise bittre peynes smerte."
Another tyme ther wolde she sitte and thynke
And caste hir eyen dounward fro the brynke;
But whan she saugh the grisly rokkes blake,
For verray feere, so wolde hir herte quake
That on hir feet she myghte hir noght sustene.
Thanne wolde she sitte adoun upon the grene,
And pitously into the see biholde,
And seyn right thus, with sorweful sikes colde:
"Eterne God, that thurgh thy purveiaunce
Ledest the world by certein governaunce,
In ydel, as men seyn, ye no thyng make.
But, lord, thise grisly feendly rokkes blake,
That semen rather a foul confusioun
Of werk, than any fair creacioun
Of swich a parfit wys God and a stable,
Why han ye wroght this werk unresonable?
For by this werk, south, north, ne west ne eest
Ther nys yfostred man, ne bryd, ne beest.
It dooth no good, to my wit, but anoyeth,
Se ye nat, lord, how mankynde it destroyeth?

842 preyde.

An hundred thousand bodyes of mankynde
Han rokkes slayn, al be they nat in mynde;
Which mankynde is so fair part of thy werk
That thou it madest lyk to thyn owene merk.
Thanne semed it ye hadde a greet chiertee
Toward mankynde; but how thanne may it bee
That ye swiche meenes make it to destroyen,
Whiche meenes do no good, but evere anoyen?
I woot wel clerkes wol seyn, as hem leste,
By argumentz, that al is for the beste,
Though I ne kan the causes nat yknowe,
But thilke God, that made wynd to blowe,
As kepe my lord; this my conclusioun.
To clerkes lete I al this disputisoun—
But wolde God, that alle thise rokkes blake,
Were sonken into helle for his sake!
Thise rokkes sleen myn herte for the feere!"
Thus wolde she seyn, with many a pitous teere.
Hir freendes sawe that it was no disport
To romen by the see, but disconfort,
And shopen for to pleyen somwher elles;
They leden hir by ryveres and by welles,
And eek in othere places delitables,
They dauncen, and they pleyen at ches and tables.
So on a day, right in the morwe tyde,
Unto a gardyn that was ther bisyde,
In which that they hadde maad hir ordinaunce
Of vitaille and of oother purveiaunce,
They goon and pleye hem al the longe day.
And this was in the sixte morwe of May,
Which May hadde peynted with his softe shoures
This gardyn ful of leves and of floures,
And craft of mannes hand so curiously
Arrayed hadde this gardyn trewely,
That nevere was ther gardyn of swich prys

887 *ne om.*

But if it were the verray Paradys.
The odour of floures and the fresshe sighte
Wolde han maked any herte lighte
That evere was born, but if to greet siknesse
Or to greet sorwe helde it in distresse;
So ful it was of beautee with plesaunce.
At after dyner gonne they to daunce
And synge also, save Dorigen allone,
Which made alwey hir compleint and hir moone
For she ne saugh hym on the daunce go
That was hir housbonde, and hir love also.
But nathelees she moste a tyme abyde,
And with good hope lete hir sorwe slyde.
Upon this daunce, amonges othere men,
Daunced a squier biforn Dorigen
That fressher was, and jolyer of array,
As to my doom, than is the monthe of May.
He syngeth, daunceth, passynge any man
That is or was, sith that the world bigan.
Therwith he was, if men sholde hym discryve,
Oon of the beste farynge man on lyve;
Yong, strong, right vertuous, and riche, and wys,
And wel biloved, and holden in greet prys.
And shortly, if the sothe I tellen shal,
Unwityng of this Dorigen at al,
This lusty squier, servant to Venus,
Which that ycleped was Aurelius,
Hadde loved hir best of any creature
Two yeer and moore, as was his aventure;
But nevere dorste he tellen hir his grevaunce,
Withouten coppe he drank al his penaunce.
He was despeyred, no thyng dorste he seye
Save in his songes somwhat wolde he wreye
His wo, as in a general compleynyng.
He seyde he lovede, and was biloved no thyng,
Of swich matere made he manye layes,

Songes, compleintes, roundels, virelayes,
How that he dorste nat his sorwe telle,
But langwissheth, as a furye dooth in helle,
And dye he moste, he seyde, as dide Ekko
For Narcisus, that dorste nat telle hir wo.
In oother manere than ye heere me seye,
Ne dorste he nat to hir his wo biwreye,
Save that paraventure som tyme at daunces,
Ther yonge folk kepen hir observaunces,
It may wel be he looked on hir face,
In swich a wise as man that asketh grace;
But no thyng wiste she of his entente.
Nathelees it happed, er they thennes wente,
By cause that he was hir neighebour,
And was a man of worship and honour,
And hadde yknowen hym of tyme yoore,
They fille in speche, and forthe moore and moore
Unto this purpos drough Aurelius.
And whan he saugh his tyme, he seyde thus:
"Madame," quod he, "by God that this world made,
So that I wiste it myghte your herte glade,
I wolde that day that youre Arveragus
Wente over the see, that I, Aurelius,
Hadde went ther nevere I sholde have come agayn.
For wel I woot my servyce is in vayn,
My gerdoun is but brestyng of myn herte.
Madame, reweth upon my peynes smerte,
For with a word ye may me sleen or save.
Heere at your feet, God wolde that I were grave,
I ne have as now no leyser moore to seye,
Have mercy, sweete, or ye wol do me deye."
She gan to looke upon Aurelius:
"Is this youre wyl!" quod she, "and sey ye thus?
"Nevere erst," quod she, "ne wiste I what ye mente.
But now, Aurelie, I knowe youre entente.

956 yong.

By thilke God, that yaf me soule and lyf,
Ne shal I nevere been untrewe wyf,
In word ne werk, as fer as I have wit.
I wol been his to whom that I am knyt.
Taak this for fynal answere as of me."
But after that, in pley thus seyde she,
"Aurelie," quod she, "by heighe God above,
Yet wolde I graunte yow to been youre love,
Syn I yow se so pitously complayne.
Looke, what day that endelong Britayne
Ye remoeve alle the rokkes, stoon by stoon,
That they ne lette shipe ne boot to goon,
I seye, whan ye han maad the coost so clene
Of rokkes that ther nys no stoon ysene,
Thanne wol I love yow best of any man!
Have heer my trouthe in al that evere I kan."
"Is ther noon oother grace in yow?" quod he.
"No, by that lord," quod she, "that maked me;
For wel I woot that it shal never bityde;
Lat swiche folies out of your herte slyde.
What deyntee sholde a man han in his lyf
For to go love another mannes wyf,
That hath hir body whan so that hym liketh?"
Aurelius ful ofte soore siketh,
Wo was Aurelie, whan that he this herde,
And with a sorweful herte he thus answerde.
"Madame," quod he, "this were an inpossible;
Thanne moot I dye of sodeyn deth horrible."
And with that word he turned hym anon.
Tho coome hir othere freendes many oon,
And in the aleyes romeden up and doun,
And no thyng wiste of this conclusioun,
But sodeynly bigonne revel newe,
Til that the brighte sonne loste his hewe,
For thorisonte hath reft the sonne his lyght—
This is as muche to seye as, it was nyght—

And hoom they goon in joye and in solas,
Save oonly wrecche Aurelius, allas!
He to his hous is goon with sorweful herte;
He seeth he may nat fro his deeth asterte;
Hym semed that he felte his herte colde;
Up to the hevene hise handes he gan holde,
And on hise knowes bare he sette hym doun,
And in his ravyng seyde his orisoun.
For verray wo out of his wit he breyde;
He nyste what he spak, but thus he seyde:
With pitous herte his pleynt hath he bigonne
Unto the goddes, and first unto the sonne
He seyde, "Appollo, God and governour
Of every plaunte, herbe, tree, and flour
That yevest after thy declinacioun
To ech of hem his tyme and his sesoun,
As thyn herberwe chaungeth lowe or heighe,
Lord Phebus, cast thy merciable eighe
On wrecche Aurelie, which that am but lorn.
Lo, lord, my lady hath my deeth ysworn
Withoute gilt, but thy benignytee
Upon my dedly herte have som pitee.
For wel I woot, lord Phebus, if yow lest,
Ye may me helpen, save my lady, best.
Now voucheth sauf that I may yow devyse
How that I may been holpen and in what wyse.
Your blisful suster, Lucina the sheene,
That of the see is chief goddesse and queene,
(Though Neptunus have deitee in the see,
Yet emperisse aboven hym is she)
Ye knowen wel, lord, that right as hir desir
Is to be quyked and lightned of youre fir,
For which she folweth yow ful bisily,
Right so the see desireth naturelly
To folwen hir, as she that is goddesse

1037 *that om.*

Bothe in the see and ryveres moore and lesse.
Wherfore, lord Phebus, this is my requeste;
Do this miracle, or do myn herte breste,
That now next at this opposicioun
Which in the signe shal be of the Leoun,
As preieth hir, so greet a flood to brynge
That fyve fadme at the leeste it oversprynge
The hyeste rokke in Armorik Briteyne,
And lat this flood endure yeres tweyne.
Thanne, certes, to my lady may I seye
'Holdeth youre heste, the rokkes been aweye.'
Lord Phebus, dooth this miracle for me,
Preye hir she go no faster cours than ye.
I seye, preyeth your suster that she go
No faster cours than ye thise yeres two.
Thanne shal she been evene atte fulle alway,
And spryng flood laste bothe nyght and day;
And but she vouche sauf in swich manere
To graunte me my sovereyn lady deere,
Prey hir to synken every rok adoun
Into hir owene dirke regioun
Under the ground ther Pluto dwelleth inne,
Or nevere mo shal I my lady wynne.
Thy temple in Delphos wol I barefoot seke,
Lord Phebus; se the teeris on my cheke,
And of my peyne have som compassioun!"
And with that word in swowne he fil adoun,
And longe tyme he lay forth in a traunce.
His brother, which that knew of his penaunce,
Up caughte hym, and to bedde he hath hym broght.
Dispeyred in this torment and this thoght
Lete I this woful creature lye;
Chese he for me wheither he wol lyve or dye.
Arveragus with heele and greet honour,
As he that was of chivalrie the flour,
Is comen hoom, and othere worthy men.

O blisful artow now, thou Dorigen!
That hast thy lusty housbonde in thyne armes,
The fresshe knyght, the worthy man of armes,
That loveth thee, as his owene hertes lyf.
No thyng list hym to been ymaginatyf
If any wight hadde spoke, whil he was oute,
To hire of love; he hadde of it no doute,
He noght entendeth to no swich mateere,
But daunceth, justeth, maketh hir good cheere,
And thus in joye and blisse I lete hem dwelle,
And of the sike Aurelius I wol telle.
In langour and in torment furyus
Two yeer and moore lay wrecche Aurelyus,
Er any foot he myghte on erthe gon;
Ne confort in this tyme hadde he noon,
Save of his brother, which that was a clerk.
He knew of al this wo and al this werk;
For to noon oother creature, certeyn,
Of this matere he dorste no word seyn.
Under his brest he baar it moore secree
Than evere dide Pamphilus for Galathee.
His brest was hool withoute for to sene,
But in his herte ay was the arwe kene.
And wel ye knowe that of a sursanure
In surgerye is perilous the cure,
But men myghte touche the arwe, or come therby.
His brother weep and wayled pryvely,
Til atte laste hym fil in remembraunce
That whiles he was at Orliens in Fraunce,
As yonge clerkes, that been lykerous.
To reden artes that been curious,
Seken in every halke and every herne
Particular sciences for to lerne,
He hym remembred, that upon a day
At Orliens in studie a book he say

1100 wol yow. 1120 artz.

Of magyk natureel, which his felawe,
That was that tyme a bacheler of lawe.—
Al were he ther to lerne another craft—
Hadde prively upon his desk ylaft;
Which book spak muchel of the operaciouns,
Touchynge the eighte and twenty mansiouns
That longen to the moone, and swich folye
As in oure dayes is nat worth a flye.
For hooly chirches feith in oure bileve
Ne suffreth noon illusioun us to greve.
And whan this book was in his remembraunce,
Anon for joye his herte gan to daunce,
And to hymself he seyde pryvely,
"My brother shal be warisshed hastily;
For I am siker that ther be sciences
By whiche men make diverse apparences
Swiche as thise subtile tregetoures pleye;
For ofte at feestes have I wel herd seye
That tregetours withinne an halle large
Have maad come in a water and a barge,
And in the halle rowen up and doun.
Somtyme hath semed come a grym leoun;
And somtyme floures sprynge as in a mede,
Somtyme a vyne, and grapes white and rede,
Somtyme a castel al of lym and stoon;
And whan hem lyked, voyded it anoon,
Thus semed it to every mannes sighte.
Now thanne conclude I thus, that if I myghte
At Orliens som oold felawe yfynde
That hadde this moones mansions in mynde,
Or oother magyk natureel above,
He sholde wel make my brother han his love;
For with an apparence a clerk may make
To mannes sighte, that alle the rokkes blake
Of Britaigne weren yvoyded everichon,

1141 tregetours. 1150 *hem* hym.

And shippes by the brynke comen and gon,
And in swich forme enduren a wowke or two;
Thanne were my brother warisshed of his wo;
Thanne moste she nedes holden hir biheste,
Or elles he shal shame hir atte leeste."
What sholde I make a lenger tale of this?
Unto his brotheres bed he comen is,
And swich confort he yaf hym for to gon
To Orliens, that he up stirte anon
And on his wey forthward thanne is he fare,
In hope for to been lissed of his care.
Whan they were come almoost to that citee,
But if it were a two furlong or thre,
A yong clerk romynge by hymself they mette
Which that in Latyn thriftily hem grette,
And after that he seyde a wonder thyng.
"I knowe," quod he, "the cause of youre comyng."
And er they ferther any foote wente,
He tolde hem al that was in hire entente!
This Briton clerk hym asked of felawes,
The whiche that he had knowe in olde dawes;
And he answerde hym that they dede were,
For which he weep ful ofte many a teere.
Doun of his hors Aurelius lighte anon,
And with this magicien forth is he gon
Hoom to his hous, and maden hem wel at ese;
Hem lakked no vitaille that myghte hem plese,
So wel arrayed hous as ther was oon,
Aurelius in his lyf saugh nevere noon.
He shewed hym, er he wente to sopeer,
Forestes, parkes ful of wilde deer,
Ther saugh he hertes with hir hornes hye,
The gretteste that evere were seyn with eye,
He saugh of hem an hondred slayn with houndes,
And somme with arwes blede of bittre woundes.
He saugh, whan voyded were thise wilde deer,

Thise fauconers upon a fair ryver,
That with hir haukes han the heroun slayn.
Tho saugh he knyghtes justyng in a playn;
And after this he dide hym swich plesaunce,
That he hym shewed his lady on a daunce
On which hymself he daunced, as hym thoughte.
And whan this maister that this magyk wroughte
Saugh it was tyme, he clapte hise handes two,
And farewel! al oure revel was ago!—
And yet remoeved they nevere out of the hous,
Whil they saugh al this sighte merveillous,
But in his studie, ther as hise bookes be,
They seten stille, and no wight but they thre.
To hym this maister called his squier,
And seyde hym thus, "Is redy oure soper?
Almoost an houre it is, I undertake,
Sith I yow bad oure soper for to make,
Whan that thise worthy men wenten with me
Into my studie, ther as my bookes be."
"Sire," quod this Squier, "whan it liketh yow,
It is al redy, though ye wol right now."
"Go we thanne soupe," quod he, "as for the beste,
This amorous folk som tyme moote han hir reste."
At after soper fille they in tretee,
What somme sholde this maistres gerdoun be,
To remoeven alle the rokkes of Britayne,
And eek from Gerounde to the mouth of Sayne.
He made it straunge, and swoor, so God hym save,
Lasse than a thousand pound he wolde nat have,
Ne gladly for that somme he wolde nat goon.
Aurelius with blisful herte anoon
Answerde thus, "Fy on a thousand pound!
This wyde world, which that men seye is round,
I wolde it yeve, if I were lord of it.
This bargayn is ful dryve, for we been knyt;
Ye shal be payed trewely, by my trouthe.

But looketh now for no necligence or slouthe
Ye tarie us heere, no lenger than to-morwe."
"Nay," quod this clerk, "have heer my feith to borwe."
To bedde is goon Aurelius whan hym leste,
And wel ny al that nyght he hadde his reste;
What for his labour and his hope of blisse,
His woful herte of penaunce hadde a lisse.
Upon the morwe, whan that it was day,
To Britaigne tooke they the righte way,
Aurelie and this magicien bisyde,
And been descended ther they wolde abyde.
And this was, as thise bookes me remembre,
The colde frosty sesoun of Decembre.
Phebus wax old, and hewed lyk latoun,
That in his hoote declynacioun
Shoon as the burned gold, with stremes brighte;
But now in Capricorn adoun he lighte,
Where as he shoon ful pale, I dar wel seyn.
The bittre frostes, with the sleet and reyn,
Destroyed hath the grene in every yerd;
Janus sit by the fyr, with double berd,
And drynketh of his bugle horn the wyn.
Biforn hym stant brawen of the tusked swyn,
And 'Nowel' crieth every lusty man.
Aurelius, in al that evere he kan,
Dooth to his master chiere and reverence,
And preyeth hym to doon his diligence
To bryngen hym out of his peynes smerte,
Or with a swerd that he wolde slitte his herte.
This subtil clerk swich routhe had of this man,
That nyght and day he spedde hym that he kan
To wayten a tyme of his conclusioun,
This is to seye, to maken illusioun
By swich an apparence or jogelrye—
I ne kan no termes of astrologye—

1241 Aurelius.

That she and every wight sholde wene and seye
That of Britaigne the rokkes were aweye,
Or ellis they were sonken under grounde.
So atte laste he hath his tyme yfounde
To maken hise japes and his wrecchednesse
Of swich a supersticious cursednesse.
Hise tables Tolletanes forth he brought,
Ful wel corrected, ne ther lakked nought,
Neither his collect ne hise expans yeeris,
Ne hise rootes, ne hise othere geeris,
As been his centris and hise argumentz,
And hise proporcioneles convenientz
For hise equacions in every thyng.
And by his eighte speere in his wirkyng
He knew ful wel how fer Alnath was shove
Fro the heed of thilke fixe Aries above
That in the ninthe speere considered is.
Ful subtilly he kalkuled al this.
Whan he hadde founde his firste mansioun,
He knew the remenaunt by proporcioun,
And knew the arisyng of his moone weel,
And in whos face and terme, and everydeel;
And knew ful weel the moones mansioun
Acordaunt to his operacioun,
And knew also hise othere observaunces
For swiche illusiouns and swiche meschaunces
As hethen folk useden in thilke dayes;—
For which no lenger maked he delayes,
But thurgh his magik, for a wyke or tweye,
It semed that alle the rokkes were aweye.
Aurelius, which that yet despeired is,
Wher he shal han his love, or fare amys,
Awaiteth nyght and day on this myracle.
And whan he knew that ther was noon obstacle,
That voyded were thise rokkes everychon,

1284 he hadde.

Doun to hise maistres feet he fil anon,
And seyde, "I woful wrecche, Aurelius,
Thanke yow, lord, and lady myn, Venus,
That me han holpen fro my cares colde."
And to the temple his wey forth hath he holde
Where as he knew he sholde his lady see,
And whan he saugh his tyme, anon right hee
With dredful herte and with ful humble cheere
Salewed hath his sovereyn lady deere.
"My righte lady," quod this woful man,
"Whom I moost drede and love as I best kan,
And lothest were of al this world displese,
Nere it that I for yow have swich disese
That I moste dyen heere at youre foot anon,
Noght wolde I telle how me is wo bigon;
But, certes, outher moste I dye or pleyne,
Ye sle me giltelees for verray peyne.
But of my deeth thogh that ye have no routhe,
Avyseth yow er that ye breke youre trouthe.
Repenteth yow for thilke God above,
Er ye me sleen by cause that I yow love.
For madame, wel ye woot what ye han hight;
Nat that I chalange any thyng of right
Of yow, my sovereyn lady, but youre grace;
But in a gardyn yond at swich a place
Ye woot right wel what ye bihighten me,
And in myn hand youre trouthe plighten ye
To love me best, God woot ye seyde so,
Al be that I unworthy be therto.
Madame, I speke it for the honour of yow,
Moore than to save myn hertes lyf right now.
I have do so as ye comanded me,
And if ye vouchesauf, ye may go see.
Dooth as yow list, have youre biheste in mynde,
For, quyk or deed, right there ye shal me fynde.

1318 giltlees.

In yow lith al, to do me lyve or deye,
But wel I woot the rokkes been aweye!"
He taketh his leve, and she astonied stood,
In al hir face nas a drope of blood.
She wende nevere han come in swich a trappe.
"Allas," quod she, "that evere this sholde happe.
For wende I nevere, by possibilitee,
That swich a monstre or merveille myghte be.
It is agayns the proces of nature."
And hoom she goth a sorweful creature,
For verray feere unnethe may she go.
She wepeth, wailleth, al a day or two,
And swowneth that it routhe was to see;
But why it was, to no wight tolde shee,
For out of towne was goon Arveragus.
But to hirself she spak, and seyde thus,
With face pale and with ful sorweful cheere,
In hire compleynt, as ye shal after heere,
"Allas!" quod she, "on thee, Fortune I pleyne,
That unwar wrapped hast me in thy cheyne;
For which tescape woot I no socour
Save oonly deeth or elles dishonour;
Oon of thise two bihoveth me to chese.
But natheless, yet have I levere to lese
My lif, than of my body have a shame,
Or knowe myselven fals or lese my name,
And with my deth I may be quyt, ywis;
Hath ther nat many a noble wyf, er this
And many a mayde yslayn hirself, allas,
Rather than with hir body doon trespas?
Yis, certes, lo, thise stories beren witnesse,
Whan thritty tirauntz, ful of cursednesse,
Hadde slayn Phidoun in Atthenes, at feste,
They comanded hise doghtres for tareste,
And bryngen hem biforn hem in despit,

1357 scour. 1358 *elles om.*

Al naked, to fulfille hir foul delit,
And in hir fadres blood they made hem daunce
Upon the pavement, God yeve hem myschaunce;
For which thise woful maydens ful of drede,
Rather than they wolde lese hir maydenhede,
They prively been stirt into a welle
And dreynte hemselven, as the bookes telle.
They of Mecene leete enquere and seke
Of Lacedomye fifty maydens eke,
On whiche they wolden doon hir lecherye;
But was ther noon of al that compaignye
That she nas slayn, and with a good entente
Chees rather for to dye than assente
To been oppressed of hir maydenhede.
Why sholde I thanne to dye been in drede?
Lo, eek the tiraunt Aristoclides,
That loved a mayden heet Stymphalides,
Whan that hir fader slayn was on a nyght,
Unto Dianes temple goth she right,
And hente the ymage in hir handes two;
Fro which ymage wolde she nevere go,
No wight ne myghte hir handes of it arace,
Til she was slayn right in the selve place.
Now sith that maydens hadden swich despit,
To been defouled with mannes foul delit,
Wel oghte a wyf rather hirselven slee,
Than be defouled, as it thynketh me.
What shal I seyn of Hasdrubales wyf
That at Cartage birafte hirself hir lyf?
For whan she saugh that Romayns wan the toun,
She took hir children alle and skipte adoun
Into the fyr, and chees rather to dye
Than any Romayn dide hir vileynye.
Hath nat Lucresse yslayn hirself, allas,
At Rome whan that she oppressed was

1406 *that om.*

Of Tarquyn, for hir thoughte it was a shame
To lyven whan she hadde lost hir name?
The sevene maydens of Melesie also
Han slayn hemself, for verray drede and wo
Rather than folk of Gawle hem sholde oppresse.
Mo than a thousand stories, as I gesse,
Koude I now telle as touchynge this mateere.
Whan Habradate was slayn, his wyf so deere
Hirselven slow, and leet hir blood to glyde
In Habradates woundes depe and wyde;
And seyde, "My body at the leeste way
Ther shal no wight defoulen, if I may."
What sholde I mo ensamples heer of sayn?
Sith that so manye han hemselven slayn,
Wel rather than they wolde defouled be,
I wol conclude that it is bet for me
To sleen myself, than been defouled thus.
I wol be trewe unto Arveragus,
Or rather sleen myself in som manere,
As dide Demociones doghter deere,
By cause that she wolde nat defouled be.
O Cedasus, it is ful greet pitee
To reden how thy doghtren deyde, allas,
That slowe hemself, for swich manere cas!
As greet a pitee was it, or wel moore,
The Theban mayden, that for Nichanore
Hirselven slow right for swich manere wo.
Another Theban mayden dide right so;
For oon of Macidonye hadde hire oppressed,
She with hire deeth hir maydenhede redressed.
What shal I seye of Nicerates wyf,
That for swich cas birafte hirself hir lyf?
How trewe eek was to Alcebiades
His love that rather for to dyen chees
Than for to suffre his body unburyed be.

1408 had. 1440 *that om.*

Lo, which a wyf was Alceste," quod she,
"What seith Omer of goode Penalopee?
Al Grece knoweth of hire chastitee.
Pardee of Lacedomya is writen thus,
That whan at Troie was slayn Protheselaus,
No lenger wolde she lyve after his day.
The same of noble Porcia telle I may,
Withoute Brutus koude she nat lyve,
To whom she hadde al hool hir herte yeve.
The parfit wyfhod of Arthemesie
Honured is thurgh al the Barbarie.
O Teuta queene, thy wyfly chastitee
To alle wyves may a mirour bee!
The same thyng I seye of Bilyea,
Of Rodogone, and eek Valeria."
Thus pleyned Dorigene a day or tweye,
Purposynge evere that she wolde deye.
But nathelees, upon the thridde nyght
Hoom cam Arveragus, this worthy knyght,
And asked hir why that she weep so soore.
And she gan wepen ever lenger the moore.
"Allas!" quod she, "that evere I was born.
Thus have I seyd," quod she, "thus have I sworn;"
And toold hym al as ye han herd bifore,
It nedeth nat reherce it yow namoore.
This housbonde with glad chiere in freendly wyse
Answerde and seyde, as I shal yow devyse,
"Is ther oght elles Dorigen, but this?"
"Nay, nay," quod she, "God helpe me so, as wys,
This is to muche, and it were Goddes wille."
"Ye, wyf," quod he, "lat slepen that is stille.
It may be wel paraventure yet to-day.
Ye shul youre trouthe holden, by my fay.
For God so wisly have mercy upon me,
I hadde wel levere ystiked for to be

1457 pleyne.

For verray love which that I to yow have,
But if ye sholde your trouthe kepe and save.
Trouthe is the hyeste thyng that man may kepe."
But with that word he brast anon to wepe
And seyde, "I yow forbede, up peyne of deeth,
That nevere whil thee lasteth lyf ne breeth,
To no wight telle thou of this aventure;
As I may best, I wol my wo endure.
Ne make no contenance of hevynesse,
That folk of yow may demen harm or gesse."
And forth he cleped a squier and a mayde;
"Gooth forth anon with Dorigen," he sayde,
"And bryngeth hir to swich a place anon,"
They take hir leve, and on hir wey they gon,
But they ne wiste why she thider wente,
He nolde no wight tellen his entente.
Paraventure, an heep of yow, ywis,
Wol holden hym a lewed man in this,
That he wol putte his wyf in jupartie.
Herkneth the tale er ye upon hire crie;
She may have bettre fortune than yow semeth,
And whan that ye han herd the tale, demeth.
  This squier, which that highte Aurelius,
On Dorigen that was so amorus,
Of aventure happed hir to meete
Amydde the toun, right in the quykkest strete,
As she was bown to goon the wey forth-right
Toward the gardyn, ther as she had hight.
And he was to the gardynward also,
For wel he spyed whan she wolde go
Out of hir hous to any maner place.
But thus they mette, of aventure or grace
And he saleweth hir with glad entente,
And asked of hir whiderward she wente.
And she answerde, half as she were mad,

1481 *of om.*

"Unto the gardyn as myn housbonde bad,
My trouthe for to holde, allas! allas!"
Aurelius gan wondren on this cas,
And in his herte hadde greet compassioun
Of hir and of hir lamentacioun,
And of Arveragus, the worthy knyght,
That bad hire holden al that she had hight,
So looth hym was his wyf sholde breke hir trouthe;
And in his herte he caughte of this greet routhe,
Considerynge the beste on every syde
That fro his lust yet were hym levere abyde
Than doon so heigh a cherlyssh wrecchednesse
Agayns franchise and alle gentillesse.—
For which in fewe wordes seyde he thus:
"Madame, seyeth to your lord Arveragus,
That sith I se his grete gentillesse
To yow, and eek I se wel youre distresse,
That him were levere han shame—and that were routhe—
Than ye to me sholde breke thus youre trouthe,
I have wel levere evere to suffre wo
Than I departe the love bitwix yow two.
I yow relesse, madame, into youre hond
Quyt every surement and every bond,
That ye han maad to me as heer biforn,
Sith thilke tyme which that ye were born.
My trouthe I plighte, I shal yow never repreve
Of no biheste, and heere I take my leve,
As of the treweste and the beste wyf
That evere yet I knew in al my lyf.
But every wyf be war of hir biheeste,
On Dorigene remembreth atte leeste!
Thus kan a squier doon a gentil dede
As wel as kan a knyght, withouten drede."
She thonketh hym upon hir knees al bare,
And hoom unto hir housbonde is she fare,
And tolde hym al, as ye han herd me sayd;

And be ye sikēr, he was so weel apayd
That it were inpossible me to wryte.
What sholde I lenger of this cas endyte?
Arveragus and Dorigene his wyf
In sovereyn blisse leden forth hir lyf,
Nevere eft ne was ther angre hem bitwene.
He cherisseth hir as though she were a queene,
And she was to hym trewe for everemoore.—
Of thise two folk ye gete of me namoore.
Aurelius, that his cost hath al forlorn
Curseth the tyme that evere he was born.
"Allas," quod he, "allas, that I bihighte
Of pured gold a thousand pound of wighte
Unto this philosophre! how shal I do?
I se namoore but that I am fordo;
Myn heritage moot I nedes selle
And been a beggere; heere may I nat dwelle,
And shamen al my kynrede in this place,
But I of hym may gete bettre grace.
But nathelees I wole of hym assaye
At certeyn dayes yeer by yeer to paye,
And thanke hym of his grete curteisye;
My trouthe wol I kepe, I wol nat lye."
With herte soor he gooth unto his cofre,
And broghte gold unto this philosophre
The value of fyve hundred pound, I gesse,
And hym bisecheth of his gentillesse
To graunte hym dayes of the remenaunt,
And seyde, "Maister, I dar wel make avaunt,
I failled nevere of my trouthe as yit.
For sikerly my dette shal be quyt
Towardes yow, how evere that I fare,
To goon a begged in my kirtle bare!
But wolde ye vouche sauf upon seuretee
Two yeer or thre, for to respiten me,

1556 *two om.*

Thanne were I wel, for elles moot I selle
Myn heritage, ther is namoore to telle."
This philosophre sobrely answerde,
And seyde thus, whan he thise wordes herde,
"Have I nat holden covenant unto thee?"
"Yes, certes, wel and trewely," quod he.
"Hastow nat had thy lady, as thee liketh?"
"No, no," quod he, and sorwefully he siketh.
"What was the cause, tel me if thou kan?"
Aurelius his tale anon bigan,
And tolde hym al, as ye han herd bifoore,
It nedeth nat to yow reherce it moore.
He seide, Arveragus of gentillesse
Hadde levere dye in sorwe and in distresse
Than his wyf were of hir trouthe fals;
The sorwe of Dorigen he tolde hym als,
How looth hir was to been a wikked wyf,
And that she levere had lost that day hir lyf,
And that hir trouthe she swoor, thurgh innocence,
She nevere erst hadde herd speke of apparence.
"That made me han of hir so greet pitee;
And right as frely as he sente hir me,
As frely sente I hir to hym ageyn.
This al and som, ther is namoore to seyn."
This philosophre answerde, "Leeve brother,
Everich of yow dide gentilly til oother.
Thou art a squier, and he is a knyght;
But God forbede, for his blisful myght,
But if a clerk koude doon a gentil dede
As wel as any of yow, it is no drede.
Sire, I releesse thee thy thousand pound,
As thou right now were cropen out of the ground,
Ne nevere er now ne haddest knowen me;
For, sire, I wol nat taken a peny of thee
For al my craft, ne noght for my travaille.
Thou hast ypayed wel for my vitaille,

It is ynogh, and farewel, have good day."
And took his hors, and forth he goth his way.
Lordynges, this questioun wolde I aske now,
Which was the mooste fre, as thynketh yow?
Now telleth me, er that ye ferther wende,
I kan namoore, my tale is at an ende.

1621 thanne wol.

Heere is ended the Frankeleyns tale.

GROUP G.

THE SECONDE NONNES TALE

The Prologe of the Seconde Nonnes Tale.

The ministre and the norice unto vices,
Which that men clepe in Englissh ydelnesse,
That porter of the gate is of delices,
To eschue, and by hir contrarie hir oppresse,
(That is to seyn by leveful bisynesse),
Wel oghten we to doon al oure entente,
Lest that the feend thurgh ydelnesse us shente.

For he, that with hise thousand cordes slye
Continuelly us waiteth to biclappe,
Whan he may man in ydelnesse espye,
He kan so lightly cacche hym in his trappe,
Til that a man be hent right by the lappe,
He nys nat war the feend hath hym in honde.
Wel oghte us werche, and ydelnesse withstonde.

And though men dradden nevere for to dye,
Yet seen men wel by resoun, doutelees,
That ydelnesse is roten slogardye,
Of which ther nevere comth no good encrees
And seen that slouthe hir holdeth in a lees,
Oonly to slepe, and for to ete and drynke,
And to devouren al that othere swynke.

And for to putte us fro swich ydelnesse,
That cause is of so greet confusioun,
I have heer doon my feithful bisynesse,

18 nencrees. 19 *hir* it.

After the legende, in translacioun
Right of thy glorious lif and passioun,
Thou with thy gerland wroght with rose and lilie,
Thee meene I, mayde and martir, seint Cecilie.

Invocacio ad Mariam.

And thow that flour of virgines art alle,
Of whom that Bernard list so wel to write,
To thee at my bigynnyng first I calle,
Thou confort of us wrecches, do me endite
Thy maydens deeth, that wan thurgh hir merite
The eterneel lyf, and of the feend victorie,
As man may after reden in hir storie.

Thow mayde and mooder, doghter of thy sone,
Thow welle of mercy, synful soules cure,
In whom that God for bountee chees to wone,
Thow humble and heigh, over every creature
Thow nobledest so ferforth oure nature,
That no desdeyn the makere hadde of kynde,
His sone in blood and flessh to clothe and wynde.

Withinne the cloistre blisful of thy sydis
Took mannes shape the eterneel love and pees,
That of the tryne compas lord and gyde is,
Whom erthe and see and hevene out of relees
Ay heryen, and thou, virgine wemmelees,
Baar of thy body, and dweltest mayden pure,
The creatour of every creature.

Assembled is in thee magnificence
With mercy, goodnesse, and with swich pitee
That thou, that art the sonne of excellence,
Nat oonly helpest hem that preyen thee,

28 *martir seint* mooder.

But oftentyme, of thy benygnytee,
Ful frely, er that men thyn help biseche,
Thou goost biforn, and art hir lyves leche.

Now help, thow meeke and blisful faire mayde,
Me, flemed wrecche in this desert of galle;
Thynk on the womman Cananee, that sayde
That whelpes eten somme of the crommes alle,
That from hir lordes table been yfalle,
And though that I, unworthy sone[1] of Eve,
Be synful, yet accepte my bileve.

And for that feith is deed withouten werkis,
So for to werken yif me wit and space,
That I be quit fro thennes that moost derk is.
O thou, that art so fair and ful of grace,
Be myn advocat in that heighe place
Theras withouten ende is songe Osanne,
Thow Cristes mooder, doghter deere of Anne!

And of thy light my soule in prison lighte,
That troubled is by the contagioun
Of my body, and also by the wighte
Of erthely lust and fals affeccioun,
O havene of refut, O salvacioune
Of hem that been in sorwe and in distresse,
Now help, for to my werk I wol me dresse.

Yet preye I yow that reden that I write,
Foryeve me, that I do no diligence
This ilke storie subtilly to endite,
For bothe have I the wordes and sentence
Of hym that at the seintes reverence
The storie wroot, and folwe hir legende.
I pray yow, that ye wole my werk amende.

[1]cf. Glossary.
83 folwen.

First wolde I yow the name of seinte Cecile
Expowne, as men may in hir storie see.
It is to seye in Englissh, 'hevenes lilie'
For pure chaastnesse of virginitee,
Or for she whitnesse hadde of honestee
And grene of conscience, and of good fame
The soote savour, lilie was hir name.

Interpretacio nominis Cecilie quam ponit frater Jacobus Januensis in legendo

Or Cecilie is to seye, 'the wey to blynde,'
For she ensample was by good techynge;
Or elles, Cecile, as I writen fynde
Is joyned by a manere conjoynynge
Of 'hevene' and 'lia,' and heere in figurynge
The 'hevene' is set for thoght of hoolynesse,
And 'lia' for hir lastynge bisynesse.

Cecile may eek be seyd, in this manere,
'Wantynge of blyndnesse,' for hir grete light
Of sapience, and for hire thewes cleere
Or elles, loo, this maydens name bright
Of 'hevene' and 'leos' comth, for which by right
Men myghte hir wel 'the hevene of peple' calle,
Ensample of goode and wise werkes alle.

For 'leos' 'peple' in Englissh is to seye,
And right as men may in the hevene see
The sonne and moone and sterres every weye,
Right so men goostly, in this mayden free,
Syen of feith the magnanymytee,
And eek the cleernesse hool of sapience,
And sondry werkes, brighte of excellence.

And right so as thise philosophres write
That hevene is swift and round and eek brennynge,
Right so was faire Cecilie the white
Ful swift and bisy evere in good werkynge,

85 *yow om.*

And round and hool in good perseverynge,
And brennynge evere in charite ful brighte.
Now have I yow declared what she highte.

Here bigynneth the Seconde Nonnes tale of the lyf of Seinte Cecile.

This mayden, bright Cecilie, as hir lif seith,
Was comen of Romayns, and of noble kynde,
And from hir cradel up fostred in the feith
Of Crist, and bar his gospel in hir mynde.
She nevere cessed, as I writen fynde,
Of hir preyere, and God to love and drede,
Bisekynge hym to kepe hir maydenhede.

And whan this mayden sholde unto a man
Ywedded be, that was ful yong of age,
Which that ycleped was Valerian,
And day was comen of hir marriage,
She, ful devout and humble in hir corage,
Under hir robe of gold, that sat ful faire,
Hadde next hir flessh yclad hir in an haire.

And whil the orgnes maden melodie,
To God allone in herte thus sang she:
"O Lord, my soule and eek my body gye
Unwemmed, lest that I confounded be."
And for his love that dyde upon a tree,
Every seconde and thridde day she faste,
Ay biddynge in hir orisons ful faste.

The nyght cam, and to bedde moste she gon
With hir housbonde, as ofte is the manere,
And pryvely to hym she seyde anon,
"O sweete and wel biloved spouse deere,

134 orgues. 137 it.

Ther is a conseil, and ye wolde it heere,
Which that right fayn I wolde unto yow seye,
So that ye swere ye shul me nat biwreye."

Valerian gan faste unto hire swere
That for no cas, ne thyng that myghte be,
He sholde nevere mo biwreyen here,
And thanne at erst to hym thus seyde she,
"I have an Aungel which that loveth me,
That with greet love, wher so I wake or sleepe,
Is redy ay my body for to kepe.

And if that he may feelen out of drede
That ye me touche, or love in vileynye,
He right anon wol sle yow with the dede,
And in youre yowthe thus ye sholden dye.
And if that ye in clene love me gye,
He wol yow loven as me for youre clennesse,
And shewen yow his joye and his brightnesse."

Valerian, corrected as God wolde,
Answerde agayn, "If I shal trusten thee,
Lat me that aungel se, and hym biholde,
And if that it a verray angel bee,
Thanne wol I doon as thou hast prayed me;
And if thou love another man, forsothe
Right with this swerd thanne wol I sle yow bothe."

Cecile answerde anon right in this wise,
"If that yow list, the angel shul ye see,
So that ye trowe in Crist, and yow baptize.
Gooth forth to Via Apia," quod shee,
"That fro this toun ne stant but miles three;
And to the povre folkes that ther dwelle
Sey hem right thus as that I shal yow telle.

155 *that om.*

Telle hem, that I Cecile yow to hem sente,
To shewen yow the goode Urban the olde,
For secree thynges and for good entente;
And whan that ye Seint Urban han biholde,
Telle hym the wordes whiche that I to yow tolde,
And whan that he hath purged yow fro synne,
Thanne shul ye se that angel er ye twynne."

Valerian is to the place ygon,
And right as hym was taught by his lernynge,
He foond this hooly olde Urban anon
Among the seintes buryeles lotynge.
And he anon, withouten tariynge,
Dide his message, and whan that he it tolde,
Urban for joye his handes gan up holde.

The teeris from hise eyen leet he falle.
"Almyghty lord, O Jesu Crist," quod he,
"Sower of chaast conseil, hierde of us alle,
The fruyt of thilke seed of chastitee
That thou hast sowe in Cecile, taak to thee.
Lo, lyk a bisy bee, withouten gile,
Thee serveth ay thyn owene thral Cecile!

For thilke spouse that she took but now
Ful lyk a fiers leoun, she sendeth heere
As meke as evere was any lomb, to yow."
And with that word anon ther gan appeere
An oold man clad in white clothes cleere,
That hadde a book with lettre of gold in honde,
And gan bifore Valerian to stonde.

Valerian as deed fil doun for drede
Whan he hym saugh, and he up hente hym tho,
And on his book right thus he gan to rede,

197 *but* right.

"O lord, o feith, o god, withouten mo,
O Cristendom, and fader of alle also,
Aboven alle, and over alle, everywhere.—"
Thise wordes al with gold ywriten were.

Whan this was rad, thanne seyde this olde man,
"Leevestow this thyng or no? sey ye or nay?"
"I leeve al this thyng," quod Valerian,
"For oother thyng than this, I dar wel say,
Under the hevene no wight thynke may."
Tho vanysshed this olde man, he nyste where;
And Pope Urban hym cristned right there.

Valerian gooth hoom, and fynt Cecilie
Withinne his chambre with an angel stonde.
This angel hadde of roses and of lilie
Corones two, the whiche he bar in honde;
And first to Cecile, as I understonde,
He yaf that oon, and after gan he take
That oother to Valerian hir make.

"With body clene and with unwemmed thoght
Kepeth ay wel thise corones," quod he,
"Fro Paradys to yow have I hem broght,
Ne nevere mo ne shal they roten bee,
Ne lese hir soote savour, trusteth me,
Ne nevere wight shal seen hem with his eye
But he be chaast and hate vileynye.

And thow Valerian, for thow so soone
Assentedest to good conseil also,
Sey what thee list, and thou shalt han thy boone."
"I have a brother," quod Valerian tho,
"That in this world I love no man so.
I pray yow that my brother may han grace,
To knowe the trouthe, as I do in this place."

209 *and om.* 226 *quod he* thre.

The angel seyde, "God liketh thy requeste,
And bothe with the palm of martirdom
Ye shullen come unto his blisful feste."
And with that word Tiburce his brother coom;
And whan that he the savour undernoom,
Which that the roses and the lilies caste,
Withinne his herte he gan to wondre faste,

And seyde, "I wondre, this tyme of the yeer,
Whennes that soote savour cometh so
Of rose and lilies that I smelle heer.
For though I hadde hem in myne handes two,
The savour myghte in me no depper go,
The sweete smel that in myn herte I fynde
Hath chaunged me al in another kynde."

Valerian seyde, "Two corones han we,
Snow-white and rose-reed that shynen cleere,
Whiche that thyne eyen han no myght to see,
And as thou smellest hem thurgh my preyere,
So shaltow seen hem, leeve brother deere,
If it so be thou wolt, withouten slouthe,
Bileve aright and knowen verray trouthe."

Tiburce answerde, "Seistow this to me?
In soothnesse or in dreem I herkne this?"
"In dremes," quod Valerian, "han we be
Unto this tyme, brother myn, ywis;
But now at erst in trouthe oure dwellyng is."
"How woostow this," quod Tiburce, "in what wyse?"
Quod Valerian, "That shal I thee devyse.

The aungel of God hath me the trouthe ytaught
Which thou shalt seen, if that thou wolt reneye
The ydoles and be clene, and elles naught."
And of the myracle of thise corones tweye

267 *the om.*

Seint Ambrose in his preface list to seye.
Solempnely this noble doctour deere
Commendeth it, and seith in this manere;

The palm of martirdom for to receyve
Seinte Cecile, fulfild of Goddes yifte,
The world and eek hire chambre gan she weyve,
Witnesse Tyburces and Valerians shrifte,
To whiche God of his bountee wolde shifte
Corones two, of floures wel smellynge,
And made his angel hem the corones brynge.

The mayde hath broght thise men to blisse above;
The world hath wist what it is worth, certeyn,
Devocion of chastitee to love. . . .
Tho shewed hym Cecile, al open and pleyn,
That alle ydoles nys but a thyng in veyn,
For they been dombe and therto they been deve,
And charged hym hise ydoles for to leve.

"Whoso that troweth nat this, a beest he is,"
Quod tho Tiburce, "If that I shal nat lye."
And she gan kisse his brest, that herde this,
And was ful glad he koude trouthe espye.
"This day I take thee for myn allye,"
Seyde this blisful faire mayde deere,
And after that she seyde as ye may heere.

"Lo, right so as the love of Crist," quod she,
"Made me thy brotheres wyf, right in that wise
Anon for myn allyee heer take I thee,
Syn that thou wolt thyne ydoles despise.
Go with thy brother now, and thee baptise,
And make thee clene, so that thou mowe biholde
The angeles face of which thy brother tolde."

273 *it* hym. 277 *Valerians* Cecilies. 281 *thise om.*

Tiburce answerde and seyde, "Brother deere,
First tel me whider I shal, and to what man?"
"To whom?" quod he, "com forth with right good cheere,
I wol thee lede unto the Pope Urban."
"Til Urban? brother myn Valerian,"
Quod tho Tiburce, "woltow me thider lede?
Me thynketh that it were a wonder dede."

"Ne menestow nat Urban," quod he tho,
"That is so ofte dampned to be deed,
And woneth in halkes alwey to and fro,
And dar nat ones putte forth his heed;
Men sholde hym brennen in a fyr so reed,
If he were founde, or that men myghte hym spye;
And we also, to bere hym compaignye,

And whil we seken thilke divinitee,
That is yhid in hevene pryvely,
Algate ybrend in this world shul we be!"
To whom Cecile answerde boldely,
"Men myghten dreden wel and skilfully
This lyf to lese, myn owene deere brother,
If this were lyvynge oonly and noon oother.

But ther is bettre lif in oother place,
That nevere shal be lost, ne drede thee noght,
Which Goddes sone us tolde thurgh his grace.
That fadres sone hath alle thyng ywroght,
And al that wroght is with a skilful thoght,
The goost, that fro the fader gan procede,
Hath sowled hem, withouten any drede.

By word and by myracle Goddes Sone,
Whan he was in this world, declared heere
That ther was oother lyf ther men may wone."

303 that I.

To whom answerde Tiburce, "O suster deere,
Ne seydestow right now in this manere,
Ther nys but o God, lord in soothfastnesse,
And now of three how maystow bere witnesse?"

"That shal I telle," quod she, "er I go.
Right as a man hath sapiences three,
Memorie, engyn, and intellect also,
So, in o beynge of divinitee
Thre persones may ther right wel bee."
Tho gan she hym ful bisily to preche
Of Cristes come, and of hise peynes teche,

And many pointes of his passioun;
How Goddes sone in this world was withholde
To doon mankynde pleyn remissioun,
That was ybounde in synne and cares colde . . .
Al this thyng she unto Tiburce tolde;
And after this, Tiburce in good entente
With Valerian to Pope Urban he wente;

That thanked God, and with glad herte and light
He cristned hym, and made hym in that place
Parfit in his lernynge, Goddes knyght.
And after this Tiburce gat swich grace
That every day he saugh in tyme and space
The aungel of God, and every maner boone
That he God axed, it was sped ful soone.

It were ful hard by ordre for to seyn
How manye wondres Jesus for hem wroghte.
But atte laste, to tellen short and pleyn,
The sergeantz of the toun of Rome hem soghte,
And hem biforn Almache the Prefect broghte,
Which hem opposed, and knew al hire entente,
And to the ymage of Juppiter hem sente,

340 *o om.*

And seyde, "Whoso wol nat sacrifise,
Swap of his heed, this my sentence heer."
Anon thise martirs that I yow devyse,
Oon Maximus, that was an officer
Of the prefectes, and his corniculer,
Hem hente, and whan he forth the seintes ladde,
Hymself he weepe, for pitee that he hadde.

Whan Maximus had herd the seintes loore,
He gat hym of the tormentoures leve,
And ladde hem to his hous withoute moore.
And with hir prechyng, er that it were eve,
They gonnen fro the tormentours to reve,
And fro Maxime, and fro his folk echone
The false feith, to trowe in God allone.

Cecile cam whan it was woxen nyght,
With preestes that hem cristned alle yfeere,
And afterward, whan day was woxen light,
Cecile hem seyde, with a ful stedefast cheere,
"Now Cristes owene knyghtes, leeve and deere,
Cast alle awey the werkes of derknesse
And armed yow in armure of brightnesse.

Ye han forsothe ydoon a greet bataille,
Youre cours is doon, youre feith han ye conserved,
Gooth to the corone of lif that may nat faille.
The rightful juge which that ye han served
Shal yeve it yow as ye han it deserved."
And whan this thyng was seyd as I devyse,
Men ledde hem forth to doon the sacrefise.

But whan they weren to the place broght,
To tellen shortly the conclusioun,
They nolde encense ne sacrifise right noght,

373 tormentours.

But on hir knees they setten hem adoun
With humble herte and sad devocioun,
And losten bothe hir hevedes in the place.
Hir soules wenten to the kyng of grace.

This Maximus that saugh this thyng bityde,
With pitous teeris tolde it anon-right,
That he hir soules saugh to hevene glyde,
With aungels ful of cleernesse and of light;
And with this word converted many a wight.
For which Almachius dide hym so bete
With whippe of leed, til he the lif gan lete.

Cecile hym took, and buryed hym anon
By Tiburce and Valerian softely,
Withinne hir buriyng place under the stoon,
And after this Almachius hastily
Bad hise ministres fecchen openly
Cecile, so that she myghte in his presence
Doon sacrifice, and Juppiter encense.

But they, converted at hir wise loore,
Wepten ful soore, and yaven ful credence
Unto hire word, and cryden moore and moore,
"Crist, Goddes sone, withouten difference,
Is verray God, this is al oure sentence,
That hath so good a servant hym to serve
This with o voys we trowen, thogh we sterve."

Almachius, that herde of this doynge,
Bad fecchen Cecile, that he myghte hir see,
And alderfirst, lo, this was his axynge:
"What maner womman artow?" tho quod he.
"I am a gentil womman born," quod she.
"I axe thee," quod he, "though it thee greeve,
Of thy religioun and of thy bileeve."

418 *al om.* 424 *tho om.*

"Ye han bigonne youre question folily,"
Quod she, "that wolden two answeres conclude
In o demande; ye axed lewedly."
Almache answerde unto that similitude,
"Of whennes comth thyn answeryng so rude?"
"Of whennes?" quod she, whan that she was freyned,
"Of conscience and of good feith unfeyned."

Almachius seyde, "Ne takestow noon heede
Of my power?" and she answerde hym,
"Youre myght," quod she, "ful litel is to dreede,
For every mortal mannes power nys
But lyke a bladdre ful of wynd, ywys;
For with a nedles poynt, whan it is blowe,
May al the boost of it be leyd ful lowe."

"Ful wrongfully bigonne thow," quod he,
"And yet in wrong is thy perseveraunce;
Wostow nat how oure myghty princes free
Han thus comanded and maad ordinaunce
That every cristen wight shal han penaunce,
But if that he his cristendom withseye—
And goon al quit, if he wole it reneye?"

"Yowre princes erren, as youre nobleye dooth,"
Quod tho Cecile, "and with a wood sentence
Ye make us gilty, and it is nat sooth,
For ye, that knowen wel oure innocence,
For as muche as we doon a reverence
To Crist, and for we bere a cristen name,
Ye putte on us a cryme, and eek a blame.

But we that knowen thilke name so
For vertuous, we may it nat withseye."
Almache answerde, "Chees oon of thise two,
Do sacrifice, or cristendom reneye,

451 *it om.*

That thou mowe now escapen by that weye."
At wich the hooly blisful faire mayde
Gan for to laughe, and to the juge sayde,

"O Juge, confus in thy nycetee,
Woltow that I reneye innocence,
To make me a wikked wight," quod shee;
"Lo, he dissymuleth heere in audience,
He stareth, and woodeth in his advertence."
To whom Almachius, "Unsely wrecche,
Ne woostow nat how far my myght may strecche?

Han noght oure myghty princes to me yeven
Ye, bothe power and auctoritee
To maken folk to dyen or to lyven?
Why spekestow so proudly thanne to me?"
"I speke noght but stedfastly," quod she,
"Nat proudly, for I speke as for my syde,
We haten deedly thilke vice of pryde.

And if thou drede nat a sooth to heere,
Thanne wol I shewe al openly by right
That thou hast maad a ful gret lesyng heere,
Thou seyst, thy princes han thee yeven myght
Bothe for to sleen, and for to quyken a wight.
Thou that ne mayst but oonly lyf bireve,
Thou hast noon oother power, ne no leve!

But thou mayst seyn thy princes han thee maked
Ministre of deeth, for if thou speke of mo,
Thou lyest, for thy power is ful naked."
"Do wey thy booldnesse," seyde Almachius tho,
"And sacrifie to oure goddes er thou go.
I recche nat what wrong that thou me profre,
For I can suffre it as a philosophre.

467 and he.

But thilke wronges may I nat endure
That thou spekest of oure goddes heere," quod he.
Cecile answerde, "O nyce creature,
Thou seydest no word, syn thou spak to me,
That I ne knew therwith thy nycetee,
And that thou were in every maner wise
A lewed officer and a veyn justise.

Ther lakketh no thyng to thyne outter eyen
That thou nart blynd, for thyng that we seen alle
That it is stoon, that men may wel espyen,
That ilke stoon a god thow wolt it calle.
I rede thee lat thyn hand upon it falle,
And taste it wel, and stoon thou shalt it fynde,
Syn that thou seest nat with thyne eyen blynde.

It is a shame that the peple shal
So scorne thee, and laughe at thy folye,
For communly men woot it wel overal
That myghty God is in hise hevenes hye,
And thise ymages, wel thou mayst espye,
To thee ne to hemself mowen noght profite,
For in effect they been nat worth a myte."

Thise wordes and swiche othere seyde she,
And he weex wrooth, and bad men sholde hir lede
Hom til hir hous, and "in hire hous," quod he,
"Brenne hire right in a bath of flambes rede."
And as he bad, right so was doon in dede,
For in a bath they gonne hire faste shetten,
And nyght and day greet fyre they underbetten.

The longe nyght and eek a day also
For al the fyr and eek the bathes heete
She sat al coold, and feelede no wo;
It made hir nat a drope for to sweete.

510 ne mowen. 521 feeled.

But in that bath hir lyf she moste lete,
For he Almachius, with a ful wikke entente,
To sleen hir in the bath his sonde sente.

Thre strokes in the nekke he smoot hir tho,
The tormentour, but for no maner chaunce
He myghte noght smyte al hir nekke atwo.
And for ther was that tyme an ordinaunce
That no man sholde doon men swich penaunce
The ferthe strook to smyten, softe or soore,
This tormentour ne dorste do namoore.

But half deed, with hir nekke ycorven there,
He lefte hir lye, and on his wey is went.
The cristen folk, which that aboute hir were.
With sheetes han the blood ful faire yhent.
Thre dayes lyved she in this torment,
And nevere cessed hem the feith to teche;
That she hadde fostred, hem she gan to preche.

And hem she yaf hir moebles, and hir thyng,
And to the Pope Urban bitook hem tho,
And seyde, "I axed this at hevene kyng
To han respit thre dayes, and namo,
To recomende to yow er that I go
Thise soules, lo, and that I myghte do werche
Heere of myn hous perpetuelly a cherche."

Seint Urban with hise deknes prively
This body fette, and buryed it by nyghte,
Among hise othere seintes, honestly.
Hir hous the chirche of seinte Cecilie highte;
Seint Urban halwed it, as he wel myghte,
In which, into this day, in noble wyse
Men doon to Crist and to his seinte servyse.

534 *is* he.

Heere is ended the Seconde Nonnes tale.

PROLOGUE TO THE CHANOUNS YEMANNES TALE

The prologe of the Chanouns yemannes tale.

Whan ended was the lyf of seinte Cecile,
Er we hadde riden fully fyve mile,
At Boghtoun under Blee us gan atake
A man, that clothed was in clothes blake,
And undernethe he wered a whyt surplys.
His hakeney, which that was al pomely grys,
So swatte, that it wonder was to see,
It semed as he had priked miles three.
The hors eek that his yeman rood upon
So swatte, that unnethe myghte it gon.
Aboute the peytrel stood the foom ful hye,
He was of fome al flekked as a pye.
A male tweyfoold upon his croper lay,
It semed that he caried lite array.
Al light for somer rood this worthy man,
And in myn herte wondren I bigan
What that he was, til that I understood
How that his cloke was sowed to his hood;
For which, whan I hadde longe avysed me,
I demed hym som Chanoun for to be.
His hat heeng at his bak doun by a laas,
For he hadde riden moore than trot or paas;
He hadde ay priked lik as he were wood.
A clote-leef he hadde under his hood
For swoot, and for to kepe his heed from heete.
But it was joye for to seen hym swete!
His forheed dropped as a stillatorie

554 *ended was* toold was al. 558 *whyt om.* 562 *hors* hakeney. 569 to wondren.

Were ful of plantayne and of paritorie.
And whan that he was come, he gan to crye,
"God save," quod he, "this joly compaignye!
"Faste have I priked," quod he, "for youre sake,
By cause that I wolde yow atake,
To riden in this myrie compaignye."
His Yeman eek was ful of curteisye,
And seyde, "Sires, now in the morwe tyde
Out of youre hostelrie I saugh yow ryde,
And warned heer my lord and my soverayn
Which that to ryden with yow is ful fayn
For his desport; he loveth daliaunce."
"Freend, for thy warnyng God yeve thee good chaunce,"
Thanne seyde oure Hoost, "for certein, it wolde seme
Thy lord were wys, and so I may wel deme.
He is ful jocunde also, dar I leye.
Can he oght telle a myrie tale or tweye
With which he glade may this compaignye?"
"Who, sire, my lord? ye, ye, with-outen lye!
He kan of murthe and eek of jolitee
Nat but ynough, also, sire, trusteth me.
And ye hym knewen as wel as do I,
Ye wolde wondre how wel and craftily
He koude werke, and that in sondry wise.
He hath take on hym many a greet emprise,
Which were ful hard for any that is heere
To brynge aboute, but they of hym it leere.
As hoomly as he rit amonges yow,
If ye hym knewe, it wolde be for youre prow,
Ye wolde nat forgoon his aqueyntaunce
For muchel good, I dar leye in balaunce
Al that I have in my possessioun.
He is a man of heigh discrecioun,
I warne yow wel, he is a passyng man."
"Wel," quod oure Hoost, "I pray thee, tel me than,

586 *this* som. 591 *that om.* 593 *good om.* 602 knewe.

Is he a clerk, or noon? telle what he is?"
"Nay, he is gretter than a clerk, ywis,"
Seyde this Yeman, "and in wordes fewe,
Hoost, of his craft somwhat I wol yow shewe.
I seye my lord kan swich subtilitee—
But al his craft ye may nat wite for me,
And somwhat helpe I yet to his wirkyng—
That al this ground on which we been ridyng
Til that we come to Caunterbury toun,
He koude al clene turne it up so doun
And pave it al of silver and of gold."
And whan this Yeman hadde this tale ytold
Unto oure Hoost, he seyde, "Benedicitee,
This thyng is wonder merveillous to me,
Syn that thy lord is of so heigh prudence,
By cause of which men sholde hym reverence,
That of his worship rekketh he so lite.
His overslope nys nat worth a myte
As in effect to hym, so moot I go.
It is al baudy and to-tore also,
Why is thy lord so sluttissh, I the preye,
And is of power bettre clooth to beye,
If that his dede accorde with thy speche?
Telle me that, and that I thee biseche."
"Why," quod this Yeman, "wherto axe ye me?
God help me so, for he shal nevere thee!
But I wol nat avowe that I seye,
And therfore keepe it secree, I yow preye;
He is to wys, in feith, as I bileeve!
That that is overdoon, it wol nat preeve
Aright; as clerkes seyn, it is a vice.
Wherfore in that I holde hym lewed and nyce;
For whan a man hath over-greet a wit,
Ful oft hym happeth to mysusen it.
So dooth my lord, and that me greveth soore.
God it amende, I kan sey yow namoore."

"Therof no fors, good Yeman," quod oure Hoost,
"Syn of the konnyng of thy lord thow woost,
Telle how he dooth, I pray thee hertely,
Syn that he is so crafty and so sly.
Where dwelle ye, if it to telle be?"
"In the suburbes of a toun," quod he,
"Lurkynge in hernes and in lanes blynde,
Where as thise robbours and thise theves by kynde
Holden hir pryvee fereful residence,
As they that dar nat shewen hir presence.
So faren we if I shal seye the sothe."
"Now," quod oure Hoost, "yit lat me talke to the,
Why artow so discoloured of thy face?"
"Peter," quod he, "God yeve it harde grace,
I am so used in the fyr to blowe,
That it hath chaunged my colour, I trowe.
I am nat wont in no mirour to prie,
But swynke soore, and lerne multiplie.
We blondren evere, and pouren in the fir,
And, for al that, we faille of oure desir.
For evere we lakke of oure conclusioun;
To muchel folk we doon illusioun,
And borwe gold, be it a pound or two,
Or ten, or twelve, or manye sommes mo,
And make hem wenen at the leeste weye
That of a pound we koude make tweye.
Yet is it fals, but ay we han good hope
It for to doon, and after it we grope.
But that science is so fer us biforn,
We mowen nat, although we hadden sworn,
It over-take, it slit awey so faste.
It wole us maken beggers atte laste."
Whil this yeman was thus in his talkyng,
This Chanoun drough hym neer, and herde al thyng
Which this Yeman spak, for suspecioun

663 *talke* telle; *yit om.*

Of mennes speche evere hadde this Chanoun.
For Catoun seith, that he that gilty is
Demeth alle thyng be spoke of hym, ywis.
That was the cause he gan so ny hym drawe
To his yeman, to herknen al his sawe.
And thus he seyde unto his yeman tho,
"Hoold thou thy pees, and spek no wordes mo,
For if thou do, thou shalt it deere abye.
Thou sclaundrest me heere in this compaignye,
And eek discoverest that thou sholdest hyde."
"Ye," quod our Hoost, "telle on, what so bityde,
Of al his thretyng rekke nat a myte."
"In feith," quod he, "namoore I do but lyte."
And whan this Chanoun saugh it wolde nat bee,
But his Yeman wolde telle his pryvetee,
He fledde awey for verray sorwe and shame.
"A!" quod the Yeman, "heere shal arise game.
Al that I kan, anon now wol I telle,
Syn he is goon, the foule feend hym quelle!
For nevere heer after wol I with hym meete,
For peny ne for pound, I yow biheete.
He that me broghte first unto that game,
Er that he dye, sorwe have he and shame.
For it is ernest to me, by my feith,
That feele I wel, what so any man seith.
And yet, for al my smert and al my grief,
For al my sorwe, labour, and meschief,
I koude nevere leve it in no wise.
Now wolde God, my wit myghte suffise
To tellen al that longeth to that art,
And nathelees yow wol I tellen part.
Syn that my lord is goon, I wol nat spare,
Swich thyng as that I knowe, I wol declare.

Heere endeth the prologe of the Chanouns yemannes tale.

706 *after* om. 711 *so* that.

THE TALE.

[After a lengthy account of the practice of alchemy by his master, the yeoman tells how a priest is beguiled of his money by a certain canon through trickery of a hollow rod.]

GROUP H.

PROLOGUE TO THE MAUNCIPLES TALE

Heere folweth the Prologe of the Maunciples tale.

Woot ye nat where ther stant a litel toun,
Which that ycleped is Bobbe-up-and-doun
Under the Blee, in Caunterbury weye?
Ther gan oure Hooste for to jape and pleye,
And seyde, "Sires, what, Dun is in the Myre!
Is ther no man for preyere ne for hyre,
That wole awake oure felawe al bihynde?
A theef myghte hym ful lightly robbe and bynde.
See how he nappeth, see how for Cokkes bones,
That he wol falle fro his hors atones.
Is that a Cook of London, with meschaunce?
Do hym come forth, he knoweth his penaunce,
For he shal telle a tale, by my fey,
Although it be nat worth a botel hey.
Awake, thou Cook," quod he, "God yeve thee sorwe,
What eyleth thee, to slepe by the morwe?
Hastow had fleen al nyght, or artow dronke?
Or hastow with som quene al nyght yswonke
So that thow mayst nat holden up thyn heed?"
This Cook that was ful pale, and no thyng reed,
Seyde to oure Hoost, "So God my soule blesse,
As ther is falle on me swich hevynesse,
Noot I nat why, that me were levere slepe
Than the beste galon wyn in Chepe."
"Wel," quod the Maunciple, "if it may doon ese
To thee, Sire Cook, and to no wight displese

4 hoost. 14 botel.

Which that heere rideth in this compaignye,
And that oure Hoost wole of his curteisye,
I wol as now excuse thee of thy tale,
For, in good feith, thy visage is ful pale.
Thyne eyen daswen eek, as that me thynketh,
And wel I woot, thy breeth ful soure stynketh.
That sheweth wel thou art nat wel disposed,
Of me, certeyn, thou shalt nat been yglosed.
See how he ganeth, lo, this dronken wight!
As though he wolde swolwe us anonright.
Hoold cloos thy mouth, man, by thy fader kyn,
The devel of helle sette his foot therin.
Thy cursed breeth infecte wole us alle,
Fy, stynkyng swyn! fy, foule moote thou falle!
A, taketh heede, sires, of this lusty man!
Now, sweete sire, wol ye justen atte fan?
Therto me thynketh ye been wel yshape,
I trowe that ye dronken han wyn-ape,
And that is, whan men pleyen with a straw."
And with this speche the Cook wax wrooth and wraw,
And on the Manciple he gan nodde faste,
For lakke of speche, and doun the hors hym caste,
Where as he lay til that men up hym took;
This was a fair chyvachee of a Cook!
Allas, he nadde holde hym by his ladel!
And er that he agayn were in his sadel
Ther was greet showvyng bothe to and fro,
To lifte hym up, and muchel care and wo,
So unweeldy was this sory palled goost.
And to the Manciple thanne spak oure hoost,
"By cause drynke hath dominacioun,
Upon this man, by my savacioun,
I trowe he lewedly wolde telle his tale.
For were it wyn, or oold or moysty ale,
That he hath dronke, he speketh in his nose,

29 *as om.* 59 lewedly he.

And fneseth faste, and eek he hath the pose.
He hath also to do moore than ynough
To kepen hym and his capul out of slough,
And if he falle from his capul eftsoone,
Thanne shal we alle have ynogh to doone
In liftyng up his hevy dronken cors.
Telle on thy tale, of hym make I no fors;
But yet, Manciple, in feith thou art to nyce,
Thus openly repreve hym of his vice.
Another day he wole peraventure
Reclayme thee and brynge thee to lure.
I meene he speke wole of smale thynges,
As for to pynchen at thy rekenynges,
That were nat honeste, if it cam to preef."
"No," quod the Manciple, "that were a greet mescheef,
So myghte he lightly brynge me in the snare;
Yet hadde I levere payen for the mare,
Which that he rit on, than he sholde with me stryve
I wol nat wratthen hym, al so moot I thryve;
That that I speke, I seyde it in my bourde.
And wite ye what, I have heer in a gourde
A draghte of wyn, ye, of a ripe grape,
And right anon ye shul seen a good jape.
This Cook shal drynke therof if that I may,
Up peyne of deeth, he wol nat seye me nay."
And certeynly, to tellen as it was,
Of this vessel the Cook drank faste; allas,
What neded hym? he drank ynough biforn!
And whan he hadde pouped in this horn,
To the Manciple he took the gourde agayn,
And of that drynke the Cook was wonder fayn,
And thanked hym in swich wise as he koude.
Thanne gan oure Hoost to laughen wonder loude,
And seyde, "I se wel it is necessarie
Where that we goon, that drynke we with us carie.
For that wol turne rancour and disese

Tacord and love and many a wrong apese.
O thou Bacus, yblessed be thy name,
That so kanst turnen ernest into game!
Worship and thank be to thy deitee!
Of that mateere ye gete namoore of me,
Telle on thy tale, Manciple, I thee preye."
"Wel, sire," quod he, "now herkneth what I seye."

99 *thou om.*

THE MAUNCIPLES TALE

Heere bigynneth the Maunciples tale of the Crowe.

Whan Phebus dwelled heere in this world adoun,
As olde bookes maken mencioun,
He was the mooste lusty bachiler
In al this world, and eek the beste archer.
He slow Phitoun the serpent, as he lay
Slepynge agayn the sonne upon a day;
And many another noble worthy dede
He with his bowe wroghte, as men may rede.
Pleyen he koude on every mynstralcie,
And syngen, that it was a melodie
To heeren of his cleere voys the soun.
Certes, the kyng of Thebes, Amphioun,
That with his syngyng walled that citee,
Koude nevere syngen half so wel as hee.
Therto he was the semelieste man,
That is or was sith that the world bigan.
What nedeth it hise fetures to discryve?
For in this world was noon so fair on lyve.
He was therwith fulfild of gentillesse,
Of honour, and of parfit worthynesse.
This Phebus that was flour of bachilrie,
As wel in fredom as in chivalrie,
For his desport, in signe eek of victorie
Of Phitoun, so as telleth us the storie,
Was wont to beren in his hand a bowe.
Now hadde this Phebus in his hous a crowe,
Which in a cage he fostred many a day,
And taughte it speken as men teche a jay.
Whit was this crowe, as is a snow-whit swan,
And countrefete the speche of every man

132 speke. 133 *is om.*

He koude, whan he sholde telle a tale.
Therwith in al this world no nyghtyngale
Ne koude, by an hondred thousand deel,
Syngen so wonder myrily and weel.
Now hadde this Phebus in his hous a wyf
Which that he lovede moore than his lyf;
And nyght and day dide evere his diligence
Hir for to plese and doon hire reverence.
Save oonly, if the sothe that I shal sayn,
Jalous he was, and wolde have kept hire fayn,
For hym were looth byjaped for to be—
And so is every wight in swich degree;
But all in ydel, for it availleth noght.
A good wyf that is clene of werk and thoght
Sholde nat been kept in noon awayt, certayn.
And trewely the labour is in vayn
To kepe a shrewe, for it wol nat bee.
This holde I for a verray nycetee,
To spille labour for to kepe wyves,
Thus writen olde clerkes in hir lyves.
But now to purpos, as I first bigan:
This worthy Phebus dooth al that he kan
To plesen hir, wenynge that swich plesaunce,
And for his manhede and his governaunce,
That no man sholde han put hym from hire grace.
But God it woot, ther may no man embrace
As to destreyne a thyng, which that nature
Hath natureelly set in a creature.
Taak any bryd, and put it in a cage,
And do al thyn entente and thy corage
To fostre it tendrely with mete and drynke,
Of alle deyntees that thou kanst bithynke;
And keepe it al so clenly as thou may,
Al though his cage of gold be never so gay,
Yet hath this brid, by twenty thousand foold,

143 *if om.*

Levere in a forest that is rude and coold
Goon ete wormes, and swich wrecchednesse;
For evere this brid wol doon his bisynesse
To escape out of his cage, whan he may.
His libertee this brid desireth ay.
Lat take a cat, and fostre hym wel with milk,
And tendre flessh, and make his couche of silk,
And lat hym seen a mous go by the wal,
Anon he weyveth milk and flessh and al,
And every deyntee that is in that hous,
Swich appetit he hath to ete a mous.
Lo, heere hath lust his dominacioun,
And appetit fleemeth discrecioun.
A she wolf hath also a vileyns kynde,
The lewedeste wolf that she may fynde,
Or leest of reputacioun wol she take,
In tyme whan hir lust to han a make.
Alle thise ensamples speke I by thise men,
That been untrewe, and no thyng by wommen,
For men han evere a likerous appetit
On lower thyng to parfourne hire delit,
Than on hire wyves, be they never so faire,
Ne never so trewe, ne so debonaire.
Flessh is so newefangel, with meschaunce,
That we ne konne in no thyng han plesaunce
That sowneth into vertu any while.
This Phebus, which that thoghte upon no gile,
Deceyved was, for al his jolitee;
For under hym another hadde shee,
A man of litel reputacioun,
Nat worth to Phebus in comparisoun.
The moore harm is, it happeth ofte so,
Of which ther cometh muchel harm and wo.
And so bifel, whan Phebus was absent,
His wyf anon hath for hir lemman sent;

173 *whan* if. 185 that wol.

Hir lemman? certes, this is a knavyssh speche,
Foryeveth it me, and that I yow biseche.
The wise Plato seith, as ye may rede,
"The word moot nede accorde with the dede."
If men shal telle proprely a thyng,
The word moot cosyn be to the werkyng.
I am a boystous man, right thus seye I.
Ther nys no difference trewely
Bitwixe a wyf that is of heigh degree—
If of hire body dishoneste she bee—
And a povre wenche, oother than this,
If it so be they werke bothe amys,
But that the gentile in hire estaat above,
She shal be cleped his lady as in love,
And for that oother is a povre womman,
She shal be cleped his wenche, or his lemman;
And God it woot, myn owene deere brother,
Men leyn that oon as lowe as lith that oother.
  Right so bitwixe a titlelees tiraunt
And an outlawe, or a theef erraunt,
The same I seye, ther is no difference.
To Alisaundre was toold this sentence,
That for the tirant is of gretter myght,
By force of meynee for to sleen dounright,
And brennen hous and hoom, and make al playn,
Lo, therfore is he cleped a capitayn!
And for the outlawe hath but smal meynee,
And may nat doon so greet an harm as he,
Ne brynge a contree to so greet meschief,
Men clepen hym an outlawe or a theef.
But for I am a man noght textueel,
I wol noght telle of textes never a deel;
I wol go to my tale as I bigan.
  Whan Phebus wyf had sent for hir lemman,
Anon they wroghten al hir lust volage.
The white crowe that heeng ay in the cage

Biheeld hire werk, and seyde never a word,
And whan that hoom was come Phebus the lord,
This crowe sang, "Cokkow! Cokkow! Cokkow!"
"What, bryd!" quod Phebus, "what song syngestow?
Ne were thow wont so myrily to synge
That to myn herte it was a rejoysynge
To heere thy voys? allas, what song is this?"
"By God," quod he, "I synge nat amys.
Phebus," quod he, "for al thy worthynesse,
For al thy beautee and thy gentilesse,
For al thy song and al thy mynstralcye,
For al thy waityng, blered is thyn eye
With oon of litel reputacioun
Noght worth to thee, as in comparisoun
The montance of a gnat, so moote I thryve,
For on thy bed thy wyf I saugh hym swyve."
What wol ye moore? the crowe anon hym tolde,
By sadde tokenes and by wordes bolde,
How that his wyf han doon hire lecherye,
Hym to greet shame and to greet vileynye,
And tolde hym ofte, he saugh it with hise eyen.
This Phebus gan aweyward for to wryen,
And thoughte his sorweful herte brast atwo,
His bowe he bente and sette ther inne a flo,
And in his ire his wyf thanne hath he slayn.
This is theffect, ther is namoore to sayn,
For sorwe of which he brak his mynstralcie,
Bothe harpe, and lute, and gyterne, and sautrie,
And eek he brak hise arwes and his bowe,
And after that thus spak he to the crowe.
"Traitour," quod he, "with tonge of scorpioun,
Thou hast me broght to my confusioun,
Allas, that I was wroght! why nere I deed?
O deere wyf, O gemme of lustiheed,
That were to me so sad and eek so trewe,

251 *al om.* 254 *as om.*

Now listow deed with face pale of hewe,
Ful giltelees, that dorste I swere, ywys.
O rakel hand, to doon so foule amys!
O trouble wit, O ire recchelees!
That unavysed smyteth gilteles.
O wantrust, ful of fals suspecioun,
Where was thy wit and thy discrecioun?
O, every man, be war of rakelnesse,
Ne trowe no thyng withouten strong witnesse.
Smyt nat to soone, er that ye witen why,
And beeth avysed wel and sobrely,
Er ye doon any execucioun
Upon youre ire for suspecioun.
Allas, a thousand folk hath rakel ire
Fully fordoon, and broght hem in the mire!
Allas, for sorwe I wol myselven slee!"
And to the crowe, "O false theef," seyde he,
"I wol thee quite anon thy false tale;
Thou songe whilom lyk a nyghtyngale,
Now shaltow, false theef, thy song forgon,
And eek thy white fetheres everichon.
Ne nevere in al thy lif ne shaltou speke,
Thus shal men on a traytour been awreke.
Thou and thyn ofspryng evere shul be blake,
Ne nevere sweete noyse shul ye make,
But evere crie agayn tempest and rayn,
In tokenynge that thurgh thee my wyf is slayn."
And to the crowe he stirte, and that anon,
And pulled hise white fetheres everychon,
And made hym blak, and refte hym al his song,
And eek his speche, and out at dore hym slong,
Un-to the devel—which I hym bitake!—
And for this caas been alle Crowes blake.
Lordynges, by this ensample I yow preye,
Beth war and taketh kepe what I seye:

277 giltlees. 280 giltles. 300 noys.

Ne telleth nevere no man in youre lyf
How that another man hath dight his wyf;
He wol yow haten mortally, certeyn.
Daun Salomon, as wise clerkes seyn,
Techeth a man to kepen his tonge weel.
But as I seyde, I am noght textueel;
But nathelees, thus taughte me my dame;
"My sone, thenk on the crowe, on Goddes name.
My sone, keepe wel thy tonge and keepe thy freend,
A wikked tonge is worse than a feend.
My sone, from a feend men may hem blesse.
My sone, God of his endelees goodnesse
Walled a tonge with teeth and lippes eke,
For man sholde hym avyse what he speeke.
My sone, ful ofte for to muche speche
Hath many a men been spilt, as clerkes teche.
But for litel speche, avysely,
Is no man shent, to speke generally.
My sone, thy tonge sholdestow restreyne
At alle tymes, but whan thou doost thy peyne
To speke of God in honour and in preyere,
The firste vertu sone, if thou wolt leere,
Is to restreyne and kepe wel thy tonge.
Thus lerne children, whan that they been yonge,
My sone, of muchel spekyng yvele avysed,
Ther lasse spekyng hadde ynough suffised,
Comth muchel harm—thus was me toold and taught.—
In muchel speche synne wanteth naught.
Wostow wherof a rakel tonge serveth?
Right as a swerd forkutteth and forkerveth
An arm atwo, my deere sone, right so
A tonge kutteth freendshipe al atwo.
A jangler is to God abhomynable;
Reed Salomon, so wys and honurable,
Reed David in hise psalmes, reed Senekke!

331 *in om.*

My sone, spek nat, but with thyn heed thou bekke;
Dissimule as thou were deef, if that thou heere
A jangler speke of perilous mateere.
The Flemyng seith, and lerne it if thee leste,
That litel janglyng causeth muchel reste.
My sone, if thou no wikked word hast seyd,
Thee thar nat drede for to be biwreyd;
But he that hath mysseyd, I dar wel sayn,
He may by no wey clepe his word agayn.
Thyng that is seyd is seyd, and forth it gooth;
Though hym repente, or be hym leef or looth,
He is his thral to whom that he hath sayd
A tale, of which he is now yvele apayd.
My sone, be war, and be noon auctour newe
Of tidynges, wheither they been false or trewe,
Wherso thou come, amonges hye or lowe,
Kepe wel thy tonge, and thenk upon the Crowe."

Heere is ended the Maunciples tale of the Crowe.

GROUP I.

PROLOGUE TO THE PERSOUNS TALE

Heere folweth the Prologe of the Persouns tale.

By that the Maunciple hadde his tale al ended,
The sonne fro the south lyne was descended
So lowe, that he nas nat to my sighte
Degrees nyne and twenty as in highte.
Ten of the clokke it was tho, as I gesse,
For ellevene foot, or litel moore or lesse,
My shadwe was at thilke tyme as there,
Of swiche feet as my lengthe parted were
In sixe feet equal of proporcioun.
Therwith the moones exaltacioun,
I meene Libra, alwey gan ascende,
As we were entryng at a thropes ende.
For which our Hoost, as he was wont to gye,
As in this caas, oure joly compaignye,
Seyde in this wise, "Lordynges everichoon,
Now lakketh us no tales mo than oon,
Fulfilled is my sentence and my decree;
I trowe that we han herd of ech degree.
Almoost fulfild is al myn ordinaunce,
I pray to God, so yeve hym right good chaunce
That telleth this tale to us lustily!
"Sire preest," quod he, "artow a vicary,
Or arte a person? sey sooth by thy fey.
Be what thou be, ne breke thou nat oure pley;
For every man save thou hath toold his tale.
Unbokele and shewe us what is in thy male,
For trewely, me thynketh by thy cheere

Thou sholdest knytte up wel a greet mateere.
Telle us a fable anon, for Cokkes bones."
This Persoun him answerede, al atones,
"Thou getest fable noon ytoold for me,
For Paul, that writeth unto Thymothee,
Repreveth hem that weyveth soothfastnesse,
And tellen fables, and swich wrecchednesse.
Why sholde I sowen draf out of my fest
Whan I may sowen whete, if that me lest?
For which I seye, if that yow list to heere,
Moralitee and vertuous mateere;
And thanne that ye wol yeve me audience,
I wol ful fayn, at Cristes reverence,
Do yow plesaunce leefful, as I kan.
But trusteth wel I am a southren man,
I kan nat geeste Rum, Ram, Ruf by lettre,
Ne, God woot, rym holde I but litel bettre,
And therfore if yow list, I wol nat glose,
I wol yow telle a myrie tale in prose
To knytte up al this feeste, and make an ende,
And Jesu, for his grace, wit me sende
To shewe yow the wey, in this viage,
Of thilke parfit glorious pilgrymage
That highte Jerusalem celestial.
And if ye vouchesauf, anon I shal
Bigynne upon my tale, for which I preye,
Telle youre avys, I kan no bettre seye.
But nathelees, this meditacioun
I putte it ay under correccioun
Of clerkes, for I am nat textueel;
I take but sentence, trusteth weel.
Therfore I make a protestacioun
That I wol stonde to correccioun."
Upon this word we han assented soone;
For, as us semed, it was for to doone

30 *him om.*; answerde. 40 *ful om.*

To enden in som vertuous sentence,
And for to yeve hym space and audience;
And bede oure Hoost he sholde to hym seye
That alle we to telle his tale hym preye.
Oure Hoost hadde the wordes for us alle:
"Sire preest," quod he, "now faire yow bifalle,
Sey what yow list, and we wol gladly heere."
And with that word he seyde in this manere,
"Telleth," quod he, "youre meditacioun;
But hasteth yow, the sonne wole adoun.
Beth fructuous, and that in litel space,
And to do wel God sende yow his grace."

[Then follows the Persones Tale, concerning penitence, vices and virtues, and holy living. At the end appears the retractation, so-called, of Chaucer.]

Here taketh the makere of this book his leve.

Now preye I to hem alle that herkne this litel tretys or rede, that if ther be any thyng in it that liketh hem, that therof they thanken oure Lord Jesu Crist, of whom procedeth al wit and al goodnesse. And if ther be any thyng that displese hem, I preye hem also that they arrette it to the defaute of myn unkonnynge, and nat to my wyl, that wolde ful fayn have seyd bettre, if I hadde had konnynge. For oure Boke seith, 'al that is writen, is writen for oure doctrine,' and that is myn entente. Wherfore, I biseke yow mekely for the mercy of God, that ye preye for me that Crist have mercy on me, and foryeve me my giltes; and namely, of my translacions and enditynges of worldly vanitees, the whiche I revoke in my retracciouns;

As is the book of Troilus, The book also of Fame, The book of the .xxv. Ladies, The book of the Duchesse, The book of seint Valentynes day of the Parlement of Briddes, The tales of Caunterbury (thilke that sownen into synne), The book of the Leoun, and many another book, if they were in my remembrance; and many a song and many a leccherous lay, that Crist for his grete mercy foryeve me the synne. But of the translacion of Boece de Consolacione, and othere bookes of Legendes of Seintes and omelies, and moralitee, and devocioun; that thanke I oure Lord Jesu Crist, and his blisful mooder, and alle the seintes of hevene; bisekynge hem that they from hennesforth unto my lyves ende sende me grace to biwayle my giltes, and to studie to the salvacioun of my soule; and graunte me grace of verray penitence, confessioun, and satisfaccioun to

doon in this present lyf, thurgh the benigne grace of Hym, that is kyng of kynges, and preest over alle preestes, that boghte us with the precious blood of his herte, so that I may been oon of hem at the day of doome that shulle be saved. Qui cum patre, *&cetera.*

Heere is ended the book of the tales of Caunterbury compiled by Geffrey Chaucer of whos soule Jesu Crist have mercy. Amen.

THE COMPLEYNT TO PITE

Pite, that I have sought so yore agoo
With herte soore, and ful of besy peyne,
That in this worlde was never wight so woo
Withoute dethe; and yf I shal not feyne,
My purpose was to Pite to compleyne,
Upon the crueltee and tirannye
Of Love, that for my trouthe doth me dye.

And when that I, be lengthe of certeyne yeres,
Had evere in oon a tyme soughte to speke,
To Pitee ran I, al bespreynte with teres,
To prayen hir on Cruelte me awreke.
But er I myght with any worde out breke,
Or tellen any of my peynes smerte,
I fonde hir dede, and buried in an herte.

Adoune I fel, when that I saugh the herse,
Dede as a stone, while that the swogh me laste;
But up I roose, with coloure ful dyverse,
And petously on hir myn eyen caste,
And ner the corps I gan to presen faste,
And for the soule I shope me for to prey;
I nas but lorne, ther was no more to sey.

Thus am I slayne, sith that Pite is dede,
Allas that day, that ever hyt shuld falle!
What maner man dar now hold up his hede?
To whom shal eny sorwful herte calle?
Now Cruelte hath caste to slee us alle
In ydel hope, folke redelesse of peyne,
Syth she is dede, to whom shul we compleyne?

2 hert. 15 *that om.* 16 *a om.* 18 I caste. 19 *to om.* 21 *nas* was 25 shal now.

But yet encreseth me this wonder newe,
That no wight woot that she is dede, but I.
So mony men as in her tyme hir knewe;
And yet she dyed not so sodeynly,
For I have sought hir ever ful besely,
Sith firste I hadde witte or mannes mynde,
But she was dede, er that I koude hir fynde.

Aboute hir herse there stoden lustely,
Withoute any woo, as thoughte me,
Bounte parfyt, wel armed and richely,
And fresshe Beaute, Lust and Jolyte,
Assured Maner, Youthe and Honeste,
Wisdome, Estaat, Drede and Governaunce,
Confedred both by bonde and alliaunce.

A compleynt had I writen in myn honde,
For to have put to Pittee as a bille;
But when I al this companye ther fonde
That rather wolden al my cause spille
Then do me helpe, I helde my pleynte stille,
For to that folke, with-outen any fayle,
Withoute Pitee ther may no bille availe.

Then leve I al thise vertues, save Pite,
Kepynge the corps, as ye have herde me seyn,
Cofedered alle by bonde of Cruelte,
And ben assented when I shal be sleyn.
And I have put my complaynt up ageyn,
For to my foes my bille I dar not shewe,
Theffect of which seith thus, in wordes fewe:

32 she, *so om.* 34 *mannes om.*; I hadde firste. 35 *that om.* 44 *For om.* 46 wolde. 47 pleynt. 48 withoutes. 50 *I* we; *thise om.*; save oonly. 52 *alle om.*; *of* and by.

[*The Bill of Complaint.*] (*Tern* I.)

Humblest of herte, highest of reverence,
Benygne flour, coroune of vertues alle,
Sheweth unto youre rialle excellence
Youre servaunt, yf I durste me so calle,
Hys mortal harme, in which he is yfalle,
And noght al oonly for his evel fare,
But for your renoun, as he shal declare.

Hit stondeth thus, your contraire, Crueltee
Allyed is ayenst your regalye
Under colour of womanly beaute,
For men shulde not knowe hir tirannye,
With Bounte, Gentilesse, and Curtesye,
And hath depryved yow now of your place
That hyght Beaute apertenent to Grace."

For kyndely, by youre herytage ryght,
Ye be annexed ever unto Bounte,
And verrely ye oughte do youre myght
To helpe Trouthe in his adversyte.
Ye be also the corowne of Beaute,
And certes, yf ye wanten in these tweyn,
The worlde is lore, ther is no more to seyn.

(*Tern* II.)

Eke what availeth Maner and Gentilesse
Withoute yow, benygne creature?
Shal Cruelte be your governeresse?
Allas, what herte may hyt longe endure?
Wherfore, but ye the rather take cure
To breke that perilouse alliaunce,
Ye sleen hem that ben in your obeisaunce.

60 durst. 64 that your contrary. 69 *now om.* 70 is hygh; your grace. 76 want.

And further over, yf ye suffre this,
Youre renoun ys fordoo than in a throwe;
Ther shal no man wete well what Pite is.
Allas, that your renoun is falle so lowe!
Ye be also fro youre heritage y-throwe
By Cruelte, that occupieth youre place,
And we despeyred that seken to your grace.

Have mercy on me, thow Herenus quene,
That yow have sought so tendirly and yore,
Let somme streme of lyght on me be sene,
That love and drede yow, ever lenger the more,
For sothely for to seyne, I bere the soore;
And though I be not kunnynge for to pleyne,
For Goddis love, have mercy on my peyne.

(*Tern* III.)

My peyne is this, that what so I desire,
That have I not, ne no thing lyke therto;
And ever setteth desire myn hert on fire.
Eke on that other syde where so I goo,
What maner thinge that may encrese my woo,
That have I redy unsoghte every where.
Me lakketh but my deth, and than my bere.

What nedeth to shewe parcel of my peyne,
Syth every woo that herte may bethynke
I suffre, and yet I dar not to yow pleyne?
For wel I wote, though I wake or wynke,
Ye rekke not whether I flete or synke;
But natheles my trouthe I shal sustene
Unto my deth, and that shal wel be sene.

86 *than om.* 88 that ever. 91 speken. 96 *the* so. 102 sydes.
110 *whether* where. 111 yet my.

This is to seyne, I wol be youres ever
Though ye me slee by Crueltee your foo,
Algate my spirite shal never dissever
Fro youre servise, for eny peyne or woo.
Sith ye be ded, allas, that hyt is soo!
Thus for your deth I may wel wepe and pleyne,
With herte sore and ful of besy peyne.

114 *foo* soo. 117 yet ded.

THE BOOKE OF THE DUCHESSE

I have grete wonder, be this lyghte,
How that I lyve, for day ne nyghte
I may nat slepe wel nygh noght,
I have so many an ydel thoght
Purely for defaulte of slepe,
That by my trouthe I take no kepe
Of noo thinge, how hyt cometh or gooth,
Ne me nys nothynge leve nor looth.
Al is ylyche goode to me,
Joy or sorowe, wherso hyt be,
For I have felynge in no thynge,
But as yt were a mased thynge
Alway in poynt to falle a-doun,
For sorwful ymagynacioun
Ys alway hooly in my mynde.
And wel ye woote, agaynes kynde
Hyt were to lyven in thys wyse,
For Nature wolde nat suffyse
To noon erthely creature
Nat longe tyme to endure
Withoute slepe, and be in sorwe.
And I ne may, no nyght ne morwe,
Slepe, and thys melancolye
And drede I have for to dye,
Defaulte of slepe, and hevynesse,
Hath sleyne my spirite of quyknesse,
That I have loste al lustyhede.
Suche fantasies ben in myn hede,
So I not what is best too doo.
But men myght axe me, why soo
I may not sleepe, and what me is?

26 *sleyne om.* Lines 31-96 are written in this MS. in a hand of perhaps 1500.

But natheles, whoe aske this
Leseth his asking trewely.
Myselven can not telle why
The southe, but trewly, as I gesse,
I holde it be a sicknes
That I have suffred this eight yeere;
And yet my boote is never the nere,
For there nis phisicien but one
That may me heale, but that is done.
Passe we over untill efte;
That will not be, mote nedes be lefte.
Our first mater is good to kepe.
Soe when I sawe I might not slepe
Til now late, this other night,
Upon my bedde I sate upright,
And bade one reche me a booke,
A romaunce, and it me tok
To rede, and drive the night away;
For me thought it beter play
Then playen either at chesse or tables.
And in this boke were written fables
That clerkes had in olde tyme,
And other poets, put in rime
To rede, and for to be in minde,
While men loved the lawe of kinde.
This boke ne speake, but of such thinges,
Of quenes lives, and of kinges,
And many other thinges smalle.
Amonge all this, I fonde a tale
That me thought a wonder thing.
This was the tale: There was a king
That hight Seyes, and had a wife
The beste that might beare lyfe,
And this quene hight Alcyone.

32 nathles. 33 trewly. 34 tell. 36 hold. 39 is. 51 play. 56 *of* in. 58 kings 59 things. 64 best.

Soe it befill, thereafter soone,
This king wol wenden over see.
To tellen shortly, whan that he
Was in the see, thus in this wise,
Soche a tempest gan to rise
That brake her maste and made it fal,
And cleft ther ship, and dreint hem all,
That never was founden, as it telles,
Borde, ne man, ne nothing elles.
Right thus this king Seyes loste his life.
Now for to speaken of his wife,
This lady, that was left at home,
Hath wonder, that the king ne come
Home, for it was a longe terme.
Anone her herte began to erme,
And for that her thought evermo
It was not wele he dwelled soe,
She longed soe after the king
That certes, it were a pitous thing
To tell her hartely sorowfull life
That had, allas, this noble wife,
For him she loved alderbeste.
Anone she sent bothe eeste and weste
To seke him, but they founde nought.
"Alas!" (quoth shee) "that I was wrought!
And where my lord, my love, be deed?
Certes I will never eate breede,
I make a vowe to my god here,
But I mowe of my lord here."
Soche sorowe this lady to her toke
That trewly I, which made this booke,
Had suche pittee and suche rowthe
To rede hir sorwe, that by my trowthe
I ferde the worse al the morwe

67 woll. 73 founde. 76 speake of Alcyone. 79 long. 80 *erme* yerme.
82 *he dwelled* her thought. 86 she had; *allas om.* 87 alas she.

Aftir, to thenken on hir sorwe.
So whan this lady koude here noo worde
That no man myghte fynde hir lorde,
Ful ofte she swouned, and sayed alas!
For sorwe ful nygh woode she was,
Ne she koude no rede but oon,
But doune on knees she sate anoon,
And weep that pittee was to here.
"A! mercy! swete lady dere!"
Quod she to Juno, hir goddesse;
"Helpe me out of thys distresse,
And yeve me grace my lord to se
Soone, or wete wher so he be,
Or how he fareth, or in what wise,
And I shal make yowe sacrifise,
And hooly youres become I shal
With good wille, body, hert, and al.
And but thow wilte this, lady swete,
Sende me grace to slepe, and mete
In my slepe somme certeyn sweven,
Wher-thorgh that I may knowe even
Whethir my lorde be quyke or ded."
With that worde she henge doun the hed,
And felle a-swowne as colde as ston.
Hyr women kaught hir up anoon,
And broghten hir in bed al naked;
And she, forweped and forwaked,
Was wery, and thus the dede slepe
Fil on hir, or she tooke kepe,
Throgh Juno that had herde hir bone,
That made hir to slepe sone,
For as she prayede ryght so was done
In dede, for Juno ryght anone
Called thus hir messagere
To doo hir erande, and he come nere.

100 and aftir. 102 myght. 107 wepe. 109 *to om.* 127 ded.

Whan he was come she bad hym thus,
"Go bet," quod Juno, "to Morpheus—
Thou knowest hym wel, the god of slepe—
Now understonde wel, and take kepe,
Sey thus on my halfe, that he
Go faste into the grete se,
And byd hym, that on alle thynge,
He take up Seys body the kynge,
That lyeth ful pale and no thynge rody.
Byd hym crepe into the body
And doo hit goon to Alcione,
The quene, ther she lyeth allone,
And shewe hir shortly, hit ys no nay,
How hit was dreynt thys other day;
And do the body speke soo
Ryght as hyt was woned to doo,
The whiles that hit was a-lyve.
Goo now faste, and hye the blyve."
This messager toke leve, and went
Upon hys wey, and never ne stent
Til he come to the derke valey
That stant betwexe roches twey,
Ther never yet grew corne ne gras,
Ne tre, ne nothyng that oughte was,
Beste, ne man, ne nothyng elles,
Save ther were a fewe welles
Came rennynge fro the clyffes adoun
That made a dedely slepynge soun,
And ronnen doun ryght by a cave,
That was under a rokke ygrave,
Amydde the valey, wonder depe,
There these goddys lay and slepe,
Morpheus and Eclympasteyre,
That was the god of slepes eyre,

141 al. 142 That he. 144 Bud. 145 Alchione. 148 ryght soo. 156 betwex. 158, 159, *nothyng* noght.

That slepe and did noon other werke.
This cave was also as derke
As helle pitte, over al aboute,
They had good leyser for to route,
To envye who myght slepe beste;
Somme henge her chyn upon hir breste,
And slept upryght, hir hed yhedde,
And somme lay naked in her bedde,
And slepe, whiles the dayes laste.
This messager come fleynge faste,
And cried, "O how! a-wake anoon!"
Hit was for noght, there herde hym non.
"Awake," quod he, "whoo ys, lythe there?"
And blew his horne ryght in here eere,
And cried, "awaketh!" wonder hye.
This god of slepe with hys on ye
Caste up, and axed, "who clepeth there?"
"Hyt am I!" quod this messagere,
"Juno bad thow shuldest goon"—
And tolde hym what he shulde doon,
As I have tolde yow here to-fore,
Hyt ys no nede reherse hyt more;
And went hys wey whan he had sayede.
Anoon this god of slepe abrayede
Out of hys slepe, and gan to goon,
And dyd as he had bede hym doon,
Tooke up the dreynte body sone,
And bare hyt forth to Alcione,
Hys wife the quene, ther as she lay,
Ryght even a quarter before day;
And stood ryght at hys beddys fete,
And called hir ryght as she hete,
By name, and sayede, "My swete wyfe,
Awake, let be your sorwful lyfe,
For in your sorwe there lyth no rede,

182 heere. 195 dreynt. 196 Alchione.

For certes, swete, I nam but dede,
Ye shul me never on lyve yse.
But good swete herte, look that ye
Bury my body, for suche a tyde
Ye mowe hyt fynde, the see besyde;
And farewel, swete, my worldes blysse!
I praye God youre sorwe lysse;—
To lytel while oure blysse lasteth!"
With that hir eyen up she casteth,
And sawe noght. "Allas!" quod she for sorwe,
And deyede within the thridde morwe.
But what she sayede more in that swowe
I may not telle yow as nowe,
Hyt were to longe for to dwelle,
My first matere I wil yow telle,
Wherfore I have tolde this thynge
Of Alcione and Seys the kynge.
For thus moche dar I saye welle,
I had be dolven everydelle,
And ded ryght thorgh defaulte of slepe,
Yif I ne had redde and take kepe
Of this tale next before.
And I wol telle yow wherfore;
For I ne myght, for bote ne bale,
Slepe or I had redde thys tale
Of this dreynte Seys the kynge,
And of the goddis of slepynge.
Whan I had redde thys tale wel,
And over loked hyt everydel,
Me thoght wonder yf hit were so;
For I had never herde speke or tho
Of noo goddis that koude make
Men to slepe, ne for to wake,
For I ne knewe never God but oon.

204 am. 206 hert *look om.* 210 pray. 215 *swowe* sorowe. 220 Alchione. 221 say. 226 *I om.*

And in my game I sayede anoon—
And yet me lyst ryght evel to pley—
"Rather then that y shulde dey
Thorgh defaulte of slepynge thus,
I wolde yive thilke Morpheus
Or hys goddesse, dame Juno,
Or somme wight ellis, I ne roght who,
To make me slepe and have some reste,
I wil yive hym the alderbeste
Yifte, that ever he abode hys lyve,
And here, on warde, ryght now, as blyve;
Yif he wol make me slepe a lyte,
Of downe of pure dowves white
I wil yif hym a feder bedde,
Rayed with golde and ryght wel cledde
In fyne blak satyn de owter mere,
And many a pelowe, and every bere
Of clothe of Reynes to slepe softe,
Hym thar not nede to turnen ofte;
And I wol yive hym al that fallys
To a chambre, and al hys hallys
I wol do peynte with pure golde,
And tapite hem ful many folde
Of oo sute, this shal he have,
Yf I wiste where were hys cave,
Yf he kan make me slepe sone,
As did the goddesse quene Alcione;
And thus this ylke god Morpheus
May wynne of me moo fees thus,
Than ever he wanne, and to Juno
That ys hys goddesse I shal soo do,
I trow, that she shal holde hir payede."
I hadde unneth that worde y-sayede,
Ryght thus I have tolde hyt yow,
That sodeynly, I nyste how,

264 Alchione.

Suche a luste anoon me tooke
To slepe, that ryght upon my booke
Y fil aslepe, and therwith evene
Me mette so ynly swete a swevene,
So wonderful, that never yitte
Y trowe no man had the wytte
To konne wel my sweven rede;
No, not Joseph, withoute drede,
Of Egipte, ho that red so
The kynges metynge, Pharao;
No more than koude the lest of us,
Ne nat skarsly Macrobeus—
He that wrote al thavysyoun,
That he mette, kynge Scipioun,
The noble man, the Affrikan,
Swiche mervayles fortuned than—
I trowe, a-rede my dremes even.
Loo, thus hyt was, thys was my sweven.
Me thoghte thus: that hyt was May,
And in the dawenynge I lay,
Me mette thus, in my bed al naked,
And loked forth, for I was waked
With smale foules a grete hepe,
That had affrayed me out of slepe
Thorgh noyse and swettenesse of her songe.
And as me mette, they sate a-monge
Upon my chambre roofe wythoute,
Upon the tyles over al aboute,
And songen everych in hys wyse,
The moste solempne servise,
By noote, that ever man, y trowe,
Had herde, for somme of hem songe lowe,
Somme high, and al of oon acorde.
To telle shortly, att oo worde,
Was never harde so swete a steven,

278 trow. 291 thoght. 292 dawnynge. 296 of my. 298 *as* al. 301 songe

But hyt had be a thynge of heven,
So mery a soune, so swete entewnes;
That certes, for the toune of Tewnes,
I nolde but I had herde hem synge,
For al my chambre gan to rynge
Thorgh syngynge of her armonye.
For instrument nor melodye
Was nowhere herde yet halfe so swete,
Nor of acorde halfe so mete;
For ther was noon of hem that feyned
To synge, for eche of hem hym peyned
To fynde out mery crafty notys,
They ne spared not her throtys.
And soothe to seyn, my chambre was
Ful wel depeynted, and with glas
Were al the wyndowes wel yglasyd
Ful clere, and nat an hoole ycrasyd,
That to beholde hyt was grete joye.
For holy al the story of Troye
Was in the glasynge ywroght thus,
Of Ector and of kynge Priamus,
Of Achilles and Lamedoun
And eke of Medea and of Jasoun,
Of Paris, Eleyne, and of Lavyne.
And alle the wallys with colouris fyne
Were peynted, bothe text, and glose,
And al the Romaunce of the Rose.
My wyndowes were shette echon,
And throgh the glas the sonne shon
Upon my bed with bryghte bemys,
With many glade gilde stremys,
And eke the welken was so faire,
Blew, bryght, clere was the ayre,
And ful attempre, for sothe, hyt was,
For nother to colde nor hoote yt nas,

319 of mery. 329 and of kynge. 342 was.

Ne in al the welkene was a clowde.
And as I lay thus, wonder lowde
Me thoght I herde an hunte blowe.
Tassay hys horne, and for to knowe
Whether hyt were clere or horse of soune.
And I herde goynge bothe up and doune
Men, hors, houndes, and other thynge,
And al men speken of huntynge,
How they wolde slee the hert, with strengthe,
And how the hert had upon lengthe,
So moche embosed, y not now what.
Anoon, ryght whan I herde that,
How that they wolde on huntynge goon,
I was ryght glad, and up anoon
Tooke my hors and forthe I went
Out of my chambre, I never stent
Til I come to the felde withoute.
Ther overtoke y a grete route
Of huntes and eke of foresterys,
With many relayes and lymerys,
And hyed hem to the forest faste,
And I with hem; so at the laste
I asked oon, ladde a lymere,
"Say, felowe, whoo shal hunte here?"
Quod I, and he answered ageyn,
"Syr, themperour Octovyen,"
Quod he, "and ys here faste by."
"A Goddys halfe, in goode tyme," quod I,
"Go we faste!" and gan to ryde,
Whan we came to the forest syde,
Every man didde ryght anoon
As to huntynge fille to doon.
The mayster hunte anoon, fote hote,
With a grete horne blewe thre mote
At the uncoupylynge of hys houndys.

350 speke. 362 may. 364 *I om.* 369 fast.

Withynne a while the herte founde ys,
Ihalowed, and rechased faste
Longe tyme, and so at the laste
This hert rused, and staale away
Fro alle the houndes a prevy way.
The houndes had overshette hem alle,
And were on a defaulte yfalle.
Therwyth the hunte wonder faste
Blewe a forleygne at the laste.
I was go walked fro my tree,
And as I went, ther came by mee
A whelpe, that fauned me as I stoode,
That hadde yfolowed, and koude no goode.
Hyt come and crepte to me as lowe,
Ryght as hyt had me yknowe,
Hylde doun hys hede, and joyned hys erys,
And leyde al smothe doun hys herys.
I wolde have kaught hyt, and anoon
Hyt fled, and was fro me goon;
And I hym folwed, and hyt forthe went
Doune by a floury grene went
Ful thikke of gras ful softe and swete,
With flourys fele, faire under fete,
And litel used hyt semed thus,
For both Flora and Zephirus,
They two that make floures growe,
Had made her dwellynge ther, I trowe,
For hit was, on to beholde,
As thogh therthe envye wolde
To be gayer than the heven,
To have moo floures, swche[1] seven
As in the welkene sterris bee.
Hyt had forgete the povertee
That wynter, thorgh hys colde morwes,

383 *hem* hym. 384 upon. 409 walkene.
[1]See Glossary.

Had made hyt suffre, and his sorwes;
All was forgeten, and that was sene,
For al the woode was waxen grene,
Swetnesse of dewe had made hyt waxe.
Hyt ys no nede eke for to axe
Where there were many grene greves,
Or thikke of trees so ful of leves,
And every tree stoode by hym selve
Fro other wel tene fete or twelve.
So grete trees, so huge of strengthe,
Or fourty, fifty fedme lengthe,
Clene withoute bowgh or stikke,
With croppes brode, and eke as thikke,
They were nat an ynche asonder,
That hit was shadewe over al under,
And many an herte and many an hynde
Was both before me and be-hynde.
Of founes, sowres, bukkes, does,
Was ful the woode, and many roes
And many sqwireles that sete
Ful high upon the trees and ete,
And in hir maner made festys.
Shortly, hyt was so ful of bestys,
That thogh Argus, the noble counter,
Sete to rekene in hys counter,
And rekene with his figuris ten—
For by tho figuris mowe al ken
Yf they be crafty, rekene and noumbre,
And tel of every thinge the noumbre—
Yet shulde he fayle to rekene evene
The wondres, me mette in my swevene.
But forth they romed ryght wonder faste
Doune the woode, so at the laste
I was war of a man in blak,
That sete and had yturned his bak

420 *or* fro other. 424 *brode* bothe. 431 sqwirels. 446 turned.

To an ooke, an huge tree.
"Lorde," thoght I, "who may that be?
What ayleth hym to sitten here?"
Anoon ryght I wente nere;
Than founde I sitte even upryght,
A wonder wel-farynge knyght—
By the maner me thoghte soo
Of good mochel, and ryght yonge therto,
Of the age of foure and twenty yere.
Upon hys berde but lytel here,
And he was clothed al in blake.
I stalked even unto hys bake,
And ther I stoode as stille as ought,
That, soth to saye, he sawe me nought,
For why, he henge hys hede adoune,
And with a dedely sorwful soune
He made of ryme ten vers or twelfe,
Of a compleynt to hymselfe,
The moste pitee, the moste rowthe,
That ever I herde, for, by my trowthe,
Hit was gret wonder that nature
Myght suffre any creature
To have suche sorwe, and be not ded,
Ful petouse, pale, and nothynge red.
He sayed a lay, a maner songe,
Withoute noote, withoute songe,
And was thys, for ful wel I kan
Reherse hyt; ryght thus hyt began.—

The Lay.

"I have of sorwe so grete wone
That joye gete I never none,
Now that I see my lady bryght,
Which I have loved with al my myght,
Is fro me ded, and ys a-goon.

450 went. 453 thoght. 472 *One MS. gives* and hit. 476 joy.

Allas, dethe, what ayleth the?
That thou noldest have taken me
Whan thou toke my lady swete,
That was so faire, so freshe, so fre,
So goode, that men may wel se
Of al goodenesse she had no mete!"

Whan he had made thus his complaynte,
Hys sorwful hert gan faste faynte,
And his spiritis wexen dede.
The bloode was fled, for pure drede,
Doune to hys hert, to make hym warme,
For wel hyt feled the hert had harme,
To wete eke why hyt was adrad
By kynde, and for to make hyt glad;
For hit ys membre principal
Of the body; and that made al
Hys hewe chaunge and wexe grene
And pale, for ther noo bloode ys sene
In no maner lym of hys.
Anoon therwith whan y sawgh this,
He ferde thus evel there he sete,
I went and stoode ryght at his fete,
And grette hym; but he spake noght,
But argued with his oune thoght,
And in hys wytte disputed faste
Why and how hys lyfe myght laste;
Hym thought hys sorwes were so smerte
And lay so colde upon hys herte;
So throgh hys sorwes and hevy thoght
Made hym that he herde me noght,
For he had wel nygh loste hys mynde,
Thogh Pan, that men clepe god of kynde,
Were for hys sorwes never so wrothe;
But at the last, to sayn ryght sothe,

486 complaynt. 487 faynt. 498 *lym* hym. 511 the god.

He was war of me, how y stoode
Before hym, and did of myn hoode,
And had ygret hym as I best koude,
Debonayrly, and no thyng lowde.
He sayde, "I prey the, be not wrothe,
I herde the not, to seyn the sothe,
Ne I sawgh the not, syr, trewely."
"A, good sir, no fors," quod y,
"I am ryght sory yif I have oughte
Destroubled yow out of youre thoughte;
Foryive me, yif I have mystake."
"Yis, thamendys is lyght to make,"
Quod he, "for ther lyeth noon therto;
There ys no thynge myssayde nor do."
Loo, how goodely spake thys knyghte,
As hit had be another wyghte;
He made hyt nouther towgh ne queynte.
And I sawe that, and gan me aqueynt
With hym, and fonde hym so tretable,
Ryght wonder skylful and resonable,
As me thoght, for al hys bale.
Anoon-ryght I gan fynde a tale
To hym, to loke wher I myght oughte
Have more knowynge of hys thoughte.
"Sir," quod I, "this game is doon;
I holde that this hert be goon;
These huntys konne hym nowher see."
"Y do no fors therof," quod he,
"My thought ys thereon never a dele."
"Be oure Lorde," quod I, "y trow yow wele;
Ryght so me thenketh by youre chere.
But sir, oo thyng wol ye here?
Me thynketh, in grete sorowe I yow see;
But certys, good sir, yif that yee
Wolde ought discure me youre woo,

520 trewly. 547 *good om.*

I wolde, as wys God helpe me soo,
Amende hyt, yif I kan or may.
Ye mowe preve hyt be assay.
For by my trouthe, to make yow hool
I wol do alle my power hool.
And telleth me of your sorwes smerte,
Paraventure hyt may ease youre herte,
That semeth ful seke under your syde."
With that he loked on me asyde
As who sayth, "nay, that wol not be."
"Graunt mercy, goode frende," quod he,
"I thanke the that thow woldest soo,
But hyt may never the rather be doo.
No man may my sorwe glade,
That maketh my hewe to fal and fade,
And hath myn understondynge lorne,
That me ys woo that I was borne!
May noght make my sorwes slyde
Nought al the remedyes of Ovyde;
Ne Orpheus, god of melodye,
Ne Dedalus, with his playes slye,
Ne hele me may noo phisicien,
Noght Ypocras, ne Galyen.
Me ys woo that I lyve oures twelve,
But whoo so wol assay hymselve,
Whether his hert kan have pitee
Of any sorwe, lat hym see me.
Y wrechch, that deth hath made al naked
Of al blysse that ever was maked,
Y worthe worste of alle wyghtys,
That hate my dayes and my nyghtys;
My lyfe, my lustes, be me loothe,
For al welfare and I be wroothe.
The pure deth ys so ful my foo,

578 al.

That I wolde deye, hyt wolde not soo.
For whan I folwe hyt, hit wol flee,
I wolde have hym, hyt nyl nat me.
This ys my peyne, wythoute rede,
Alway deynge and be not dede,
That Thesiphus, that lyeth in helle,
May not of more sorwe telle.
And who so wiste alle, be my trouthe,
My sorwe, but he hadde rowthe
And pitee of my sorwes smerte,
That man hath a fendely herte.
For who so seethe me firste on morwe
May seyn, he hath mette with sorwe,
For y am Sorwe, and Sorwe ys y.
Allas! and I wol tel the why,
My sorowe ys turned to pleynynge,
And al my lawghtre to wepynge,
My glade thoghtys to hevynesse,
In travayle ys myn ydelnesse,
And eke my reste, my wele is woo,
My goode ys harme, and ever-moo
In wrathe ys turned my pleynge,
And my delyte into sorwynge.
Myn hele ys turned into sekenesse,
In drede ys al my sykernesse,
To derke ys turned al my lyghte,
My wytte ys foly, my day ys nyghte,
My love ys hate, my slepe wakynge,
My merthe and meles ys fastynge,
My countenaunce ys nycete,
And al abawed, where so I be.
My pees in pledynge and in werre—
Allas, how myght I fare werre!
My boldenesse ys turned to shame,

591 had.

For fals Fortune hath pleyde a game
Atte the chesse with me, allas, the while!
The trayteresse fals, and ful of gyle,
That al behoteth, and no thyng halte,
She gethe upryght and yet she is halte,
That baggeth foule and loketh faire,
The dispitouse debonaire,
That skorneth many a creature;
An ydole of fals portrayture
Ys she, for she wol sone wrien,
She is the monstres hed ywrien,
As fylthe over ystrawed with flouris.
Hir moste worshippe and hir flour ys
To lyen, for that ys hyr nature,
Withoute feythe, lawe, or mesure;
She ys fals; and ever lawghynge
With one yghe, and that other wepynge;
That ys broght up she sette al doun,
I lykne hyr to the scorpioun,
That ys a fals flateyrynge beste,
For with his hede he maketh feste,
But al amydde hys flaterynge,
With hys tayle hyt wol stynge,
And envenyme, and so wol she.
She ys thenvyouse charite
That ys ay fals, and semeth wele,
So turneth she hyr false whele
Aboute, for hyt ys nothynge stable,
Now by the fire, now at table,
For many oon hath she thus yblent.
She ys pley of enchauntement,
That semeth oon and ys not soo;
The false thefe, what hath she doo,
Trowest thou? by oure Lorde, I wol the sey.

626 *wrien* varien. 627 mowstres. 643 fals. 646 thus she. 649 fals.

At the chesse with me she gan to pleye;
With hir false draughtes dyvers
She staale on me, and toke my fers.
And whan I sawgh my fers away,
Allas, I kouthe no lenger play,
But seyde, 'farewel, swete, ywys,
And fare-wel al that ever ther ys!'
Therwith Fortune seyde, 'chek here,
And mate in the myd poynt of the chekkere'
With a poune errante, allas!
Ful craftier to pley she was
Than Athalus, that made the game
First of the chesse, so was hys name;
But God wolde I had, oones or twyes,
Ykoude and knowe the jeupardyes
That koude the Greke Pictagoras;
I shulde have pleyde the bet at ches,
And kept my fers the bet therby,
And thogh, wherto? for trewely
I holde that wysshe nat worthe a stree;
Hyt had be never the bet for me.
For Fortune kan so many a wyle,
Ther be but fewe kan hir begile,
And eke she ys the lasse to blame;
My selfe I wolde have do the same,
Before God, hadde I be as she;
She oght the more excused be.
For this I say yet more therto,
Had I be God and myghte have do
My wille, whan my fers she kaught,
I wolde have drawe the same draught.
For also wys God yive me reste,
I dar wel swere she tooke the beste!
But throgh that draught I have lorne

652 fals. 669 thoght; trewly. 676 *hadde* as. 680 she my fers. 683 he.

My blysse, allas, that I was borne!
For evermore, y trowe trewly,
For al my wille, my luste holly
Ys turned, but yet, what to doone?
Be oure lorde, hyt ys to deye soone,
For no thynge I leve hyt noght,
But lyve and deye ryght in this thoght.
For there nys planete in firmament,
Ne in ayre, ne in erthe noon element,
That they ne yive me a yifte echon
Of wepynge, whan I am allon.
For whan that I avise me wel,
And bethenke me every del,
How that ther lyeth in rekenynge
Inne my sorwe for no thynge;
And how ther levyth noe gladnesse
May gladde me of my distresse,
And how I have loste suffisance,
And therto I have no plesance,
Than may I say, I have ryght noght.
And whan al this falleth in my thoght,
Allas, than am I overcome!
For that ys doon ys not to come.
I have more sorowe than Tantale."
And whan I herde hym tel thys tale
This pitously, as I yow telle,
Unnethe myght y lenger duelle,
Hyt dyd myn hert so moche woo.
"A, goode sir!" quod I, "say not soo!
Have somme pitee on your nature
That formed yow to creature,
Remembre yow of Socrates,
For he ne counted nat thre strees
Of noght that Fortune koude doo."

701 glad.

"No," quod he, "I kan not soo."
"Why so, good syr? parde," quod y,
"Ne, say noght soo for trewely,
Thogh ye had loste the ferses twelve,
And ye for sorwe mordred yourselve,
Ye sholde be dampned in this cas
By as goode ryght as Medea was,
That slowgh hir children for Jasoun,
And Phyllis also for Demophoun
Henge hirselfe, so weylaway!
For he had broke his terme day
To come to hir; another rage
Had Dydo, the quene eke of Cartage,
That slough hirselfe, for Eneas
Was fals, which a foole she was!
And Ecquo died for Narcisus
Nolde nat love hir, and ryght thus
Hath many another foly doon.
And for Dalida died Sampson
That slough hymselfe with a pilere.
But ther is no man alyve here
Wolde for a fers make this woo!"
"Why so?" quod he, "hyt ys nat soo,
Thou woste ful lytel what thou menyst,
I have loste more than thow wenyst."
"Loo, sir, how may that be," quod y,
"Good sir, telle me al hooly
In what wyse, how, why, and wherefore
That ye have thus youre blysse lore."
"Blythely," quod he, "come sytte adoun,
I telle the up condicioun
That thou shalt hooly with al thy wytte
Doo thyn entent to herkene hitte."
"Yis, syr." "Swere thy trouthe therto."

720 yis parde. 721 *say om.;* trewly. 744 *sir how* she that may.
749 hyt the up a.

"Gladly." "Do thanne holde hereto."
"I shal ryght blythely, so God me save,
Hooly, with al the witte I have,
Here yow, as wel as I kan."
"A Goddys halfe," quod he, and began;
"Syr," quod he, "sith firste I kouthe
Have any maner wytte fro youthe,
Or kyndely understondynge
To comprehende, in any thynge,
What love was in myn oune wytte,
Dredeles I have ever yitte
Be tributarye, and yive rente
To Love hooly with goode entente,
And throgh plesaunce become his thralle,
With good wille, body, hert, and alle.
Al this I putte in his servage
As to my lorde, and did homage,
And ful devoutely I prayed hym to,
He shulde besette myn herte so,
That hyt plesance to hym were,
And worshippe to my lady dere.
And this was longe and many a yere
Or that myn herte was set owhere,
That I did thus, and nyste why,
I trowe hit came me kyndely,
Peraventure I was therto moste able
As a white walle or a table;
For hit ys redy to cachche and take
Al that men wil theryn make,
Whethir so men wil portrey or peynte,
Be the werkes never so queynte.
And thilke tyme I ferde ryght so
I was able to have lerned tho,
And to have kende as wel or better,

753 here to. 771 hert. 782 peynt. 783 queynt.

Paraunter, other arte or letre;
But for love came firste in my thoght,
Therfore I forgate hyt noght.
I ches love to my firste crafte,
Therfore hit ys with me lafte;
For why, I toke hyt of so yonge age,
That malyce had my corage
Nat that tyme turned to nothynge
Thorgh to mochel knowlachynge.
For that tyme Yowthe, my maistresse,
Governed me in ydelnesse,
For hyt was in my firste youthe,
And thoo ful lytel goode y couthe;
For al my werkes were flyttynge
That tyme, and al my thoght varyinge,
Al were to me ylyche goode
That I knewe thoo, but thus hit stoode.
Hit happed, that I came on a day
Into a place, ther that I say
Trewly the fayrest companye
Off ladyes, that evere man with ye
Had seen togedres in oo place.
Shal I clepe hyt happe other grace
That broght me there? nay, but Fortune,
That ys to lyen ful comune,
The fals trayteresse pervers!
God wolde I koude clepe hir wers,
For now she worcheth me ful woo,
And I wol tel sone why soo;
Amonge these ladyes thus echon,
Soth to seyne, sawgh y oon
That was lyke noon of the route;
For I dar swere, withoute doute,
That as the somerys sonne bryghte

790 first. 798 first. 817 y sawgh.

Ys fairer, clerer, and hath more lyghte
Than any other planete in hevene,
The moone, or the sterres sevene,
For al the worlde, so had she
Surmountede hem al of beaute,
Of maner, and of comelynesse,
Of stature, and of wel sette gladnesse,
Of godelyhede so wel besey;
Shortly what shal y more sey?
By God, and by his halwes twelve
Hyt was my swete, ryght al hir selve!
She had so stedfaste countenaunce,
So noble porte, and meyntenaunce;
And Love, that had wel herd my boone,
Had espyed me thus soone,
That she ful sone, in my thoght,
As helpe me God, so was y-kaught
So sodenly, that I ne toke
No maner counseyl, but at hir loke,
And at myn hert; for why, hir eyen
So gladly, I trow, myn herte seyen,
That purely tho myn oune thoght
Seyde hit were beter serve hir for noght
Than with another to be wel.
And hyt was sothe, for everedel
I wil anoon-ryght telle the why:
I sawgh hyr daunce so comelely,
Carole and synge so swetly,
Lawghe and pley so womanly,
And loke so debonairly,
So goodely speke, and so frendly,
That certes y trowe, that evermore
Nas seyne so blysful a tresore.

827 of so. 828 and so. 829 *more om.* 830 *His om.* 840 *And* But; *hert* hest. 853 so a.

For every heer on hir hede,
Soth to seyne, hyt was not rede,
Ne nouther yelowe, ne broune hyt nas,
Me thoghte most lyke gold hyt was
And which eyen my lady hadde!
Debonair, goode, glade, and sadde,
Symple, of goode mochel, noght to wyde;
Therto hir looke nas not asyde
Ne overthwert, but besette so wele
Hyt drewh and tooke up, everydele,
Al that on hir gan beholde.
Hir eyen semed anoon, she wolde
Have mercy—foolys wenden soo,
But hyt was never the rather doo!
Hyt nas no countrefeted thynge,
Hyt was hir oune pure lokynge,
That the goddesse, Dame Nature,
Had made hem opene by mesure
And cloos; for were she never so glad,
Hyr lokynge was not foly sprad,
Ne wildely, thogh that she pleyde;
But ever me thoght hir eyen seyde
'Be God, my wrathe ys al foryive!'
Therwith hir lyste so wel to lyve,
That dulnesse was of hir adrad;
She nas to sobre, ne to glad.
In alle thynges more mesure
Had never, I trow, creature.
But many oon with hire loke she herte,
And that sate hyr ful lytel at herte.
For she knewe nothynge of her thoght,
But whither she knew, or knew it nowght,
Algate she ne rought of hem a stree.
To gete hyr love noo nerre was he

857 thoght; *gold om.* 882-3 hert. 884 knowe.

That woned at home, than he in Ynde;
The formest was alway behynde.
But goode folke over al other
She loved, as man may do hys brother,
Of whiche love she was wounder large
In skilful placis that bere charge.
  But which a visage had she thertoo!
Allas, myn hert ys wonder woo
That I ne kan discryven hyt!
Me lakketh both Englyssh and wit
For to undo hyt at the fulle;
And eke my spiritis be so dulle
So grete a thynge for to devyse.
I have no witte that kan suffise
To comprehende hir beaute,
But thus moche dar I sayn, that she
Was rody, fressh, and lyvely hewed;
And every day hir beaute newed,
And negh hir face was alderbest;
For certys Nature had swich lest
To make that faire, that trewly she
Was hir chefe patrone of beaute,
And chefe ensample of al hir werke,
And moustre; for, be hyt never so derke,
Me thynkyth I se hir evermoo.
And yet moreover, thogh al thoo
That ever levede were now alyve,
Ne sholde ha founde to diskryve
Yn al hir face a wikked sygne,
For hit was sad, symple, and benygne.
  And which a goodely softe speche
Had that swete, my lyves leche,
So frendely, and so wel ygrounded,
Up al resoun so wel yfounded,

888 *than* that. 890 good. 904 white rody.

And so tretable to al goode,
That I dar swere wel by the roode
Of eloquence was never founde
So swete a sownynge facounde,
Ne trewer tonged, ne skorned lasse,
Ne bet koude hele, that by the masse
I durste swere, thogh the Pape hit songe,
That ther was never yet throgh hir tonge
Man ne woman gretely harmed.
As for hir, hit was al harme hyd;
Ne lasse flaterynge in hir word,
That purely hir symple recorde
Was founde as trewe as any bonde
Or trouthe of any mannys honde.
Ne chyde she koude never a dele,
That knoweth al the worlde ful wele.
But swiche a fairenesse of a nekke
Had that swete, that boon nor brekke
Nas ther non seen that mys-satte.
Hyt was white, smothe, streght, and pure flatte,
Wythouten hole; or canel-boon,
As be semynge, had she noon,
Hyr throte, as I have now memoyre,
Semed a rounde toure of yvoyre,
Of goode gretenesse, and noght to grete.
And goode faire White she hete,
That was my lady name, ryghte.
She was bothe faire and bryghte,
She had not hir name wronge;
Ryght faire shuldres, and body longe
She had, and armes; every lyth
Fattyssh, flesshy, not grete therwith,
Ryght white handes, and nayles rede;
Rounde brestes, and of good brede

931 *hir om.*

Hyr hippes were, a streight flat bakke.
I knewe on hir noon other lakke,
That al hir lymmes nere pure sywynge
In as ferre as I had knowynge.
Therto she koude so wel pley,
Whan that hir lyst, that I dar sey
That she was lyke to torche bryght
That every man may take of lyght
Ynogh, and hyt hathe never the lesse.
Of maner and of comlynesse
Ryght so ferde my lady dere;
For every wight of hir manere
Myght cachche ynogh, yif that he wolde,
Yif he had eyen hir to beholde;
For I dar swere wel, yif that she
Had amonge ten thousande be,
She wolde have be, at the lest,
A chefe meroure of al the fest,
Thogh they had stonde in a rowe,
To mennys eyen koude have knowe.
For wher so men had pleyed or wakyed,
Me thoght the felysshyppe as naked
Withouten hir, that sawgh I oones,
As a corowne withoute stones.
Trewly she was to myn eye
The soleyne Fenix of Arabye,
For ther levyth nevir but oon;
Ne swich as she ne knowe I noon.
To speke of godenesse, trewly, she
Had as moche debonairyete
As ever had Hester in the Bible,
And more, yif more were possyble.
And sothe to seyne, therwythalle
She had a wytte so generalle,

988 seyn.

So hoole enclyned to alle goode,
That al hir wytte was set, by the rode,
Withoute malyce, upon gladnesse.
And therto I sawgh never yet a lesse
Harmeful than she was in doynge.
I sey nat that she ne had knowynge
What harme was, or elles she
Had koude no good, so thenketh me.
And trewly, for to speke of trouthe
But she had hadde, hyt hadde be routhe;
Therof she had so moche hyr dele,
And I dar seyn, and swere hyt wele,
That Trouthe hymselfe over al and alle
Had chose hys maner principalle
In hir, that was his restynge place.
Therto she hadde the moste grace
To have stedefaste perseveraunce
And esy atempry governaunce
That ever I knewe, or wyste yitte,
So pure suffraunt was hir wytte.
And reson gladly she understoode;
Hyt folowed wel she koude goode.
She used gladly to do wel,
These were hir maners everydel;
Therwith she loved so wel ryght,
She wronge do wolde to no wyght,
No wyght myght doo hir noo shame,
She loved so wel hir oune name
Hyr lust to holde no wyght in honde,
Ne, be thou siker, she wolde not fonde
To holde no wyght in balaunce
By halfe worde, ne by countenaunce,
But yif men wolde upon hir lye;
Ne sende men into Walakye,
To Pruyse, and into Tartarye,

To Alysaundre, ne into Turkye,
And byd hym faste anoon, that he
Goo hoodeles to the drye se,
And come home by the Carrenare,
And sey, 'Sir, be now ryght ware,
That I may of yow here seyn
Worshyppe, or that ye come ageyn.'
She ne used no suche knakkes smale.
  But wherfore that y tel my tale?
Ryght on thys same, as I have seyde,
Was hooly al my love leyde;
For certes, she was, that swete wife,
My suffisaunce, my luste, my lyfe,
Myn happe, myn hele, and al my blysse,
My worldys welfare and my lisse,
And I hooly hires, and everydel!"
"By oure lord," quod I, "y trowe yow wel,
Hardely, your love was wel besette.
I not how ye myght have doo bette."
"Bette? ne no wyght so wele," quod he,
"Y trowe hyt wel, sir," quod I, "parde!"
"Nay, leve hyt wel!" "Sire, so do I;
I leve yow wel, that trewly
Yow thoghte, that she was the best,
And to be-holde the alderfayrest,
Who soo had loked hir with your eyen."
"With myn? nay, al that hir seyen
Seyde and swore hyt was soo;
And thogh they ne hadde, I wolde thoo
Have loved best my lady free.
Thogh I had hadde al the beaute
That ever had Alcipyades,
And al the strengthe of Ercules,
And therto had the worthynesse

1027 into. 1039 *lisse* goddesse.

Of Alysaunder, and al the rychesse
That ever was in Babyloyne,
In Cartage, or in Macedoyne,
Or in Rome, or in Nynyve;
And to also as hardy be
As was Ector, so have I joye,
That Achilles slough at Troye—
And therfore was he slayn alsoo,
In a temple, for bothe twoo
Were slayne, he and Antylegyus—
And so seyth Dares Frygius,
For love of Polixena;
Or ben as wis as Mynerva,
I wolde ever, withoute drede,
Have loved hir, for I most nede.
Nede? nay, trewly, I gabbe nowe;
Noght 'nede,' and I wol telle howe;
For of goode wille myn hert hyt wolde,
And eke to love hir I was holde
As for the fairest and the beste.
She was as good, so have I reste,
As ever was Penolopee of Grece,
Or as the noble wife Lucrece,
That was the best, he telleth thus,
The Romayne, Tytus Lyvyus.
She was as good, and nothynge lyke,
Thogh hir stories be autentyke;
Algate she was as trewe as she—
But wherfore that I telle the?
  Whan I firste my lady say,
I was ryght yonge, sothe to say,
And ful grete nede I hadde to lerne;
Whan my herte wolde yerne
To love, hyt was a grete empryse.
But as my wytte koude beste suffise,

After my yonge childely wytte,
Withoute drede, I besette hytte,
To love hir in my beste wyse
To do hir worshippe, and the servise
That I koude thoo, be my trouthe,
Withoute feynynge outher slouthe;
For wonder feyne I wolde hir se,
So mochel hyt amended me,
That whan I sawgh hir first a-morwe
I was warished of al my sorwe,
Of al day after til hyt were eve;
Me thoghte nothyng myghte me greve
Were my sorwes never so smerte.
And yet she sytte so myn herte,
That by my trouthe y nolde noght,
For ay thys worlde, oute of my thoght
Leve my lady, noo, trewly!"
"Now by my trouthe, sir," quod I,
"Me thynketh ye have suche a chaunce
As shryfte wythoute repentaunce."
"Repentaunce? nay, fy!" quod he,
"Shulde y now repente me
To love? nay, certis, than were I wel
Wers than was Achetofel,
Or Anthenor, so have I joye,
The traytore that betraysed Troye;
Or the false Genelloun,
He that purchased the tresoun
Of Rowlande and of Olyvere.
Nay, while I am alyve here,
I nyl foryete hir never moo."
"Now, good syr," quod I, as thoo,
"Ye han wel tolde me here before,
Hyt ys no nede to reherse more,

1096 best. 1103 warshed. 1105 thoght. 1120 fals. 1125 *as om.*

How ye sawgh hir firste, and where;
But wolde ye tel me the manere
To hire which was your first speche?
Therof I wolde yow beseche;
And how she knewe first your thoght,
Whether ye loved hir or noght;
And telleth me eke what ye have lore
I herde yow telle herebefore."
"Yee," he seyde, "thow nost what thou menyst;
I have lost more than thou wenyst."
"What losse ys that?" quod I thoo.
"Nyl she not love yow? ys hyt soo?
Or have ye oght doon amys,
That she hathe lefte yow, ys hyt this?
For Goddys love, telle me alle."
"Before God," quod he, "and I shalle.
I say ryght as I have seyde,
On hir was al my love leyde,
And yet she nyste hyt never a del
Noght longe tyme, leve hyt wel.
For be ryght siker, I durste noght
For al this worlde tel hir my thoght,
Ne I wolde have wraththed hir, trewly.
For wostow why, she was lady
Of the body, she had the hert,
And who hath that may not astert.
But, for to kepe me fro ydelnesse,
Trewly I did my besynesse
To make songes, as I best koude,
And ofte tyme I songe hem loude,
And made songes this a grete dele,
Al thogh I koude not make so wele
Songes, ne knowe the arte alle
As koude Lamekys sone, Tuballe,

1146 nat never. 1154 so fro. 1160 *ne* the.

That founde out firste the art of songe;
For as hys brothres hamers ronge
Upon hys anvelet, up and doun,
Therof he tooke the first soun.
But Grekes seyn Pictagoras,
That he the firste fynder was
Of the arte; Aurora telleth soo,
But therof no fors of hem twoo.
Algatis, songes thus I made
Of my felynge, myn hert to glade,
And loo, this was myn alther-first—
I not wher hyt were the werst—

'Lorde, hyt maketh myn herte lyght
Whan I thenke on that swete wyght
That is so semely on to see;
And wisshe to God, hit myght so bee
That she wolde holde me for hir knyght,
My lady, that is so faire and bryght!'

Now have I tolde, the sothe to say,
My firste songe. Upon a day
I bethoghte me what woo
And sorwe that I suffred thoo
For hir, and yet she wyst hyt noght,
Ne tel hir durst I nat my thoght.
'Allas,' thoght I, 'y kan no rede!
And, but I telle hir, I nam but dede.
And yif I telle hyr, to sey ryght sothe,
I am adred she wol be wrothe.
Allas, what shal I thanne doo?'
In this debate I was so woo
Me thoght myn herte brast a-tweyne.
So at the laste, sothe to sayne,

1167 first. 1172 *myn om.; this* thus. 1174 hert. 1181 first. 1182 bethoght. 1187 am. 1192 hert. 1193 last.

I be-thoght me, that nature
Ne formed never in creature
So moche beaute, trewely
And bounte, wythoute mercy.
In hope of that, my tale I tolde
With sorwe, as that I never sholde;
For nedys, and mawgree my hede,
I most have tolde hir, or be dede.
I not wel how that I beganne—
Ful evel reherse hyt I kan—
And eke, as helpe me God withalle,
I trowe hyt was in the dismalle
That was the ten woundes of Egipte;
For many a worde I overskipte
In my tale, for pure fere
Lest my wordys mys-sette were.
With sorweful herte, and woundes dede,
Softe and quakynge for pure drede
And shame, and styntynge in my tale
For ferde, and myn hewe al pale,
Ful ofte I wexe bothe pal and rede.
Bowynge to hir I heng the hede—
I durste nat ones loke hir on—
For witte, maner, and al was goon.
I seyde 'mercy!' and no more.
Hyt nas no game, hyt sate me sore.
So at the laste, sothe to seyne,
Whan that myn hert was come ageyne,
To telle shortely al my speche,
With hool herte I gan hir beseche
That she wolde be my lady swete;
And swore, and gan hir hertely hete
Ever to be stedfast and trewe,
And love hir alwey fresshly newe,

1196 trewly. 1222 *al* at.

And never other lady have,
And al hir worshippe for to save.
As I best koude, I swore hir this,
'For youres is alle, that ever ther ys,
For evermore, myn herte swete,
And never to false yow, but I mete,
I nyl, as wysse God helpe me soo!'
And whan I had my tale ydoo,
God wote, she acounted nat a stree
Of al my tale, so thoghte me!
To telle shortly ryght as hyt ys,
Trewly hir answere, hyt was this—
I kan not now wel counterfete
Hyr wordys, but this was the grete
Of hir answere, she sayde 'nay!'
Alle outerly, allas, that day!
The sorowe I suffred, and the woo
That trewly Cassandra, that soo
Bewayled the destruccioun
Of Troy and of Ilyoun
Had never swich sorwe as I thoo.
I durst no more say ther-too
For pure fere, but stale away;
And thus I lyved ful many a day,
That trewely I hadde no nede
Ferther than my beddes hede
Never a day to seche sorwe.
I fonde hyt redy every morwe,
For why, I loved hyr in no gere.
So hit befel another yere,
I thoughte ones I wolde fonde
To do hir knowe and understonde
My woo, and she wel understode
That I ne wilned no thynge but gode

1237 thoght.

And worshippe, and to kepe hir name
Over alle thynges, and dred hir shame,
And was so besy hyr to serve,
And pitee were I shulde sterve,
Syth that I wilned noon harme, ywys.
So whan my lady knewe al thys
My lady yaf me al hooly
The noble yifte of hir mercy,
Savynge hir worshippe by al weyes,
Dredles, I mene noon other weyes.
And therwith she yaf me a rynge,
I trowe hyt was the first thynge.
But yif myn hert was iwaxe
Gladde, that is no nede to axe.
As helpe me God, I was as blyve
Reysed as fro dethe to lyve,
Of al happes the alderbeste,
The gladdest, and the moste at reste;
For trewely that swete wyght,
Whan I had wrong and she the ryght,
She wolde alway so goodely
Foryeve me so debonairely,
In al my yowthe, in alle chaunce,
She tooke me in hir governaunce.
Therwyth she was alway so trewe
Our joye was ever-ylyche newe.
Oure hertys werne so evene a payre
That never nas that oon contrarye
To that other, for noo woo.
For sothe ylyche they suffred thoo
Oo blysse and eke oo sorwe bothe;
Ylyche they were, bothe glad and wrothe;
Al was us oon, withoute were;
And thus we lyved ful many a yere

1280 trewly. 1281 *the om.* 1284 al (2).

So wel, I kan nat telle how!"
"Sir," quod I, "where is she now?"
"Now!" quod he, and stynte anoon. . . .
Therwith he waxe as dede as stoon,
And seyde, "Allas, that I was bore!
That was the losse that here before
I tolde the, that I hadde lorne.
Bethenke how I seyde herebeforne
'Thow wost ful lytel what thow menyst,
I have lost more than thow wenyst,'
God wote, allas, ryght that was she!"
"Allas, sir, how? what may that be?"
"She ys ded!" "nay!" "Yis, be my trouthe!"
"Is that youre losse? be God, hyt ys routhe!"
And with that worde, ryght anoon
They gan to strake forth, al was doon,
For that tyme the herte huntynge.
With that me thoghte that this kynge
Anoon gan homewarde for to ryde
Unto a place was there besyde,
Which was from us but a lyte,
A longe castel, with wallys white,
Be seynt Johan, on a ryche hille,
As me mette; but thus hyt fille—
Ryght thus me mette, as I yow telle—
That in the castell ther was a belle,
As hyt hadde smyten oures twelve.
Therewyth I awooke my selve,
And fonde me lyinge in my bedde,
And the booke that I hadde redde
Of Alcione and Seys the kynge
And of the goddys of slepynge,
I fond hyt in myn honde ful evene.
Thoght I, "Thys ys so queynt a swevene

1313 thoght. 1314 *Anoon om.* 1322 smyte.

That I wol, be processe of tyme, 1330
Fonde to put this swevene in ryme
As I kan best, and that anoon."
This was my swevene, now hit ys doon.

Explicit the Boke of the Duchesse.

THE COMPLAYNT OF MARS

(1)

"Gladeth, ye foules, of the morowe gray,
Loo, Venus! rysen amonge yon rowes rede;
And floures fressh, honouren ye this day,
For when the sunne uprist then wol ye sprede.
But ye lovers, that lye in eny drede,
Fleeth, lest wikked tonges yow espye,
Loo, yonde the sunne, the candel of jalosye.

(2)

Wyth teres blew, and with a wounded hert
Taketh your leve, and with seynt John to borowe
Apeseth sumwhat of your sorowes smert;
Tyme cometh efte that cese shal your sorowe,
The glade nyght ys worthe an hevy morowe."
Seynt Valentyne, a foule thus herd I synge
Upon your day, er sunne gan up-sprynge.

(3)

Yet sange this foule, "I rede yow al a wake,
And ye that han not chosen in humble wyse,
Without repentynge cheseth yow your make;
And ye that han ful chosen as I devise,
Yet at this fest renoveleth your servyse,
Confermeth hyt perpetuely to dure,
And paciently taketh your aventure.

(4)

And for the worship of this highe fest
Yet wol I, in my briddes wise, synge

1 *of* on; *foules* lovers. 2 *yon* yow. 3 *ye* the. 4 *ye* they. 9 sent. 12 glad.

The sentence of the compleynt, at the lest,
That woful Mars made atte departyng
Fro fresshe Venus in a morwnyng,
Whan Phebus with his firy torches rede
Ransaked every lover in hys drede.—"

(5)

Whilom the thridde hevenes lord above
As wel by hevenysh revolucioun
As by desert, hath wonne Venus his love,
And she hath take him in subjeccioun,
And as a maistresse taught him his lessoun,
Commaundynge him that nevere in her servise
He ner so bolde no lover to dispise.

(6)

For she forbad him jelosye at alle,
And cruelte, and bost, and tyrannye,
She made him at her lust so humble and talle
That when her deyned to cast on hym her ye,
He toke in pacience to lyve or dye;
And thus she brydeleth him in her maner
With nothing but with scourging of her cher.

(7)

Who regneth now in blysse but Venus,
That hath thys worthy knyght in governaunce?
Who syngeth now but Mars, that serveth thus
The faire Venus causer of plesaunce?
He bynt him to perpetuall obeisaunce,
And she bynt her to loven him for ever,
But so be that his trespace hyt desever.

28 hath every. 38 *him om.;* calle. 42 *scourging* stering. 46 fair. 48 love.

(8)

Thus be they knyt, and regnen as in heven
Be lokyng moost;—til hyt fil on a tyde
That by her bothe assent was set a steven
That Mars shal entre as fast as he may glyde
Into hir nexte paleys to abyde,
Walkynge hys cours til she had him atake,
And he preiede her to haste her for his sake.

(9)

Then seyde he thus, "Myn hertis lady suete,
Ye knowe wel my myschefe in that place,
For sikirly til that I with yow mete,
My lyfe stant ther in aventure and grace;
But when I se the beaute of your face,
Ther ys no dred of deth may do me smert,
For alle your lust is ese to myn hert."

(10)

She hath so grete compassion on her knyght
That dwelleth in solitude til she come,
For hyt stode so that ylke tyme no wight
Counseyled hym, ne seyde to hym welcome
That nyghe her witte for sorowe was overcome,
Wherfore she sped her as fast in her wey
Almost in oon day as he dyd in twey.

(11)

The grete joye that was betwex hem two
When they be mette, ther may no tunge tel,
Ther is no more, but unto bed thei go,
And thus in joy and blysse I let hem duel,
This worthi Mars, that is of knyghthode wel,
The flour of feyrenesse lappeth in his armes,
And Venus kysseth Mars the god of armes.

54 next. 56 *haste* faste.

(12)

Sojourned hath this Mars, of which I rede,
In chambre amyd the paleys prively
A certeyn tyme, til him fel a drede
Throgh Phebus, that was comen hastely
Within the paleys yates ful sturdely
With torche in honde, of which the stremes bryght
On Venus chambre knokkeden ful lyght.

(13)

The chambre ther as ley this fresshe quene
Depeynted was with white boles grete,
And by the lyght she knew, that shone so shene,
That Phebus cam to bren hem with his hete.
This cely Venus, nygh dreynt in teres wete,
Enbraceth Mars and seyde, "alas, I dye,
The torch is come that al this world wol wrie."

(14)

Up sterte Mars, hym luste not to slepe,
When he his lady herde so compleyne;
But for his nature was not for to wepe,
In stid of teres, fro his eyen tweyne
The firi sparkes brosten out for peyne;
And hent his hauberke that ley hym besyde;
Fle wold he not, ne myght himselven hide.

(15)

He throweth on his helme of huge wyght,
And girt him with his swerde; and in his honde
His myghty spere, as he was wont to fyght,
He shaketh so that almost hit towonde;
Ful hevy was he to walken over londe,
He may not holde with Venus companye,
But bad her fleen, lest Phebus her espye.

84 knokken. 92 stert; lust. 95 twyne. 99 three.

(16)

O woful Mars! alas, what maist thou seyn,
That in the paleys of thy disturbaunce
Art left byhynde, in peril to be sleyn;
And yet therto ys double thy penaunce,
For she that hath thyn hert in governaunce
Is passed halfe the stremes of thin yen,
That thou ner swift, wel maist thou wepe and crien!

(17)

Now fleeth Venus into Cilinios toure,
With voide cours, for fere of Phebus lyght.
Alas, and ther ne hath she no socoure,
For she ne founde ne saugh no maner wyght;
And eke as ther she had but litil myght,
Wherfor, herselven for to hyde and save,
Within the gate she fledde into a cave.

(18)

Derke was this cave, and smokyng as the hel,
Not but two pas within the yate hit stode.
A naturel day in derk I let her duel;
Now wol I speke of Mars, furiouse and wode,
For sorow he wold have sene his herte blode,
Sith that he myght done her no companye,
He ne roghte not a myte for to dye.

(19)

So feble he wex for hete and for his wo,
That nygh he swelt, he myght unnethe endure.
He passeth but a steyre in dayes two;
But ner the lesse, for al his hevy armure,
He foloweth her that is his lyves cure,
For whos departyng he toke gretter ire
Then for al his brennyng in the fire.

108 art thou. 114 *with* wich. 115 *ne om.* 119 *fledde* fel. 121 *pas* pales. 124 hert. 125 have done. 126 thoght. 129 *steyre* sterre.

(20)

After he walketh softely a paas,
Compleynyng, that hyt pite was to here.
He seyde, "O lady bryght, Venus, alas,
That evere so wyde a compas ys my spere!
Alas when shal I mete yow, herte dere?
This twelve dayes of Apprile I endure
Throgh jelouse Phebus this mysaventure."

(21)

Now God helpe sely Venus allone!
But as God wolde, hyt happed for to be
That while that Venus weping made her mone
Cilinius, rydinge in his chevache,
Fro Venus valaunse myght his paleys se,
And Venus he salueth, and maketh chere,
And her receyveth as his frende ful dere.

(22)

Mars dwelleth forth in his adversyte,
Compleynyng ever on her departynge;
And what his compleynt was, remembreth me;
And therfore, in this lusty morwnynge,
As I best can, I wol hit seyn and synge,
And after that I wol my leve take,
And God yif every wyght joy of his make!

The compleynt of Mars.

The ordre of compleynt requireth skylfully
That yf a wight shal pleyne petously,
Ther mot be cause, wherfore that men pleyn,
Other men may deme he pleyneth folely
And causeles; alas, that am not I!

138 hert. 145 valaunses. 156 pleyn.

Wherfor the grounde and cause of al my peyn,
So as my troubled witte may hit ateyn,
I wol reherse, not for to have redresse,
But to declare my grounde of hevynesse.

[*First Tern.*]

The first tyme, alas, that I was wroght,
And for certeyn effectes hider broght
Be him that lordeth ech intelligence,
I yaf my trwe servise and my thoght
For ever-more, how dere I have hit boght,
To her that is of so gret excelence,
That what wight that first sheweth his presence,
When she is wrothe, and taketh of hym no cure,
He may not longe in joye of love endure.

This is no feyned mater that I telle;
My lady is the verrey sours and welle
Of beaute, lust, fredam, and gentilnesse,
Of riche aray, how dere men hit selle,
Of al disport, in which men frendly duelle,
Of love and pley, and of benigne humblesse,
Of soune of instrumentes of al suetnesse,
And therto so wel fortuned and thewed,
That thorow the worlde her goodnesse is yshewed.

What wonder ys then, thogh that I beset
My servise on such on that may me knet
To wele or wo, sith hit lythe in her myght?
Therfore my hert for ever I to her het,
Ne truly, for my dethe, I shal not let
To ben her truest servaunt and her knyght.
I flater noght, that may wete every wyght;
For this day in her servise shal I dye,
But grace be I se her ones wyth ye.

169 *To* that. 182 *that om.* 185 het hight. 190 *ones* oenes *alt. fr.* neuer.

[*Second Tern.*]

To whom shal I than pleyn of my distresse?
Who may me helpe? who may my harme redresse?
Shal I compleyn unto my lady fre?
Nay, certes, for she hath such hevynesse,
For fere and eke for wo, that, as I gesse,
In lytil tyme hit wol her bane be.
But were she safe, hit wer no fors of me.
Alas, that ever lovers mote endure,
For love, so many a perilouse aventure!

For tho so be, that lovers be as trewe
As eny metal that is forged newe,
In mony a case hem tydeth ofte sorowe,
Somtyme her ladies wil not on hem rewe;
Somtyme, yf that jelosie hyt knewe,
They myghten lyghtly ley her hede to borowe;
Somtyme envyous folke, with tunges horowe,
Departen hem, alas, whom may they plese?
But he be fals, no lover hath his ese.

But what availeth suche a longe sermoun
Of aventures of love up and doune?
I wol returne, and speken of my peyne;
The poynt is this, of my distruccioun
My righte lady, my savacyoun,
Is in affray, and not to whom to pleyn.
O herte suete, O lady sovereyn,
For your disese I oght wel swowne and swelt,
Thogh I none other harme ne drede felt.

[*Third Tern.*]

To what fyne made the god that sitte so hye,
Be-nethen him love other companye,
And streyneth folke to love malgre her hede?

191 *than om.* 203 somme. 215 hert. 216 sowne. 219 *him om.*

And then her joy, for oght I can espye,
Ne lasteth not the twynkelyng of an eye;
  And somme han never joy til they be dede.
  What meneth this? what is this mystihede?
Wherto constreyneth he his folke so fast
Thing to desyre but hit shulde last?

And thogh he made a lover love a thing,
And maketh hit seme stidfast and during,
  Yet putteth he in hyt such mysaventure,
That rest nys ther noon in his yevinge.
And that is wonder, that so juste a kynge
  Doth such hardnesse to his creature.
  Thus, whether love breke or elles dure,
Algates he that hath with love to done,
Hath ofter wo then changed ys the mone.

Hit semeth he hath to lovers enemyte,
And lyke a fissher, as men alday may se,
  Bateth hys angle-hoke with summe plesaunce,
Til mony a fissch ys wode to that he be
Sesed ther-with, and then at erst hath he
  Al his desire, and ther-with al myschaunce;
  And thogh the lyne breke, he hath penaunce,
For with the hoke he wounded is so sore,
That he his wages hathe for evermore.

[*Fourth Tern.*]

The broche of Thebes was of such a kynde,
So ful of rubies and of stones ynde,
  That every wight that set on hit an ye,
He wend anon to worthe out of his mynde,
So sore the beaute wold his herte bynde.
  Til he hit had, him thoght he muste dye;

226 shuld. 230 *noon om.* 233 wether. 246 of ynde. 249 hert. 250 must.

And whan that hit was his, then shuld he drye
Such woo for drede, ay while that he hit had,
That welnygh for the fere he shuldè mad.

And whan hit was fro his possessioun,
Then had he double wo and passioun,
For he so feir a tresore had forgo;
But yet this broche, as in conclusioun
Was not the cause of this confusioun,
But he that wroght hit, enfortuned hit so,
That every wight that had hit shuld have wo;
And therfore in the worcher was the vice,
And in the covetour that was so nyce.

So fareth hyt by lovers and by me,
For thogh my lady have so gret beaute
That I was mad til I had gete her grace,
She was not cause of myn adversite,
But he that wroght her, also mot I the,
That putte suche a beaute in her face
That made me coveten and purchace
Myn oune dethe, him wite I that I dye,
And myn unwitte, that ever I clombe so hye.

[*Fifth Tern.*]

But to yow, hardy knyghtis of renoun,
Syn that ye be of my devisioun,
Al be I not worthy to so grete a name,
Yet seyn these clerkes, I am your patroun;
Therfore ye oght have somme compassioun
Of my disese, and take hit not agame.
The pruddest of yow may be made ful tame;
Wherfore I prey yow of your gentilesse,
That ye compleyne for myn hevynesse.

251 *that, his om.* 253 shuld. 259 enfortune. 267 *also* as. 268 put; *a om.* 271 ovne witte. 280 compleyn.

And ye, my ladyes, that ben true and stable,
Be wey of kynde, ye oghten to be able
To have pite of folke that be in peyn.
Now have ye cause to clothe yow in sable,
Sith that youre emperise, the honurable,
Is desolat, wel oghte ye to pleyne,
Now shuld your holy teres falle and reyne.
Alas, your honour and your emperise,
Negh ded for drede, ne can her not chevise.

Compleyneth eke, ye lovers, al in fere,
For her that with unfeyned humble chere,
Was evere redy to do yow socoure;
Compleyneth her that evere hath had yow dere;
Compleyneth beaute, fredom, and manere;
Compleyneth her that endeth your labour;
Compleyneth thilke ensample of al honour
That never did but alway gentilesse;
Kytheth therfor on her summe kyndenesse.

286 oght. 293 complen; der.

THE PARLEMENT OF FOULES

Here begynyth the parlement of ffoulys.

The lyf so short, the craft so longe to lerne,
Thassay so sharp, so hard the conquerynge,
The dredful joye alwey that slit so yerne,
Al this mene I be Love, that my felynge
Astonyd with his wondyrful werkynge
So sore, Iwis, that whan I on hym thynke,
Nat wot I wel wher that I flete or synke.

For al be that I knowe nat Love indede,
Ne wot how that he quitith folk here hyre,
Yit happith me ful ofte in bokis reede
Of hise myraklis and his crewel yre,
That rede I wel, he wole be lord and syre.
I dar nat seyn, his strokis been so sore,
But God save swich a lord! I sey namoore.

Of usage, what for lust and what for lore,
On bokis rede I ofte, as I yow tolde.
But wherfore that I speke al this? nat yoore
Agon, it happede me for to beholde
Upon a bok was wrete with letteris olde,
And therupon, a certeyn thing to lerne,
The longe day ful faste I redde and yerne.

For oute of olde feldys, as men sey,
Comyth al this newe corn from yer to yere,
And out of olde bokis, in good fey,
Comyth al this newe science that men lere.
But now to purpos as of this matere;
To rede forth so gan me to delite
That al that day me thoughte but a lyte.

4 myn, and elsewhere in this text. 6 I wis. 12 wele. 22 ofte.

This bok of which I make of mencioun
Entytlt was al thus, as I schal telle,
"Tullyus of the drem of Scipioun."
Chapiteris sevene it hadde, of hevene and helle
And erthe, and soulis that therynne dwelle,
Of whiche, as shortly as I can it trete,
Of his centence I wele yow seyn the greete.

Fyrst tellith it, whan Scipion was come
In Affrik, how he metyth Massynisse,
That hym for joie in armys hath inome.
Thanne tellyth he here speche, and of the blysse
That was betwixsyn hem til that day gan mysse;
And how his auncestre, Affrycan so deere,
Gan in his slep that nyght to hym apere.

Thanne tellith it, that from a sterry place
How Affrycan hath hym Cartage schewid,
And warnede hym beforn of al his grace;
And seyde, what man lernyd other lewid
That lovede comoun profyt wel ithewid,
He shulde into a blysful place wende,
There as joye is, that last withoutyn ende.

Thanne axede he, if folk that now been dede
Han lyf and dwellynge in anothir place.
And Affrican seyde, "ya, withoutyn drede,"
And that oure present worldis lyvys space
Nys but a maner deth, what weye we trace;
And rightful folk schul gon aftyr they deye
To hevene, and schewede hym the galaxy.

Thanne shewede he hym the litel erthe that here is
At regard of the hevenys quantite,
And after shewede he hym the nyne speris,

31 sothiom. 33 theryn. 39 spche. 40 thil. 53 wordis. 56 galylye.
57 *litel om.*

And aftyr that, the melodye herde he
That comyth of thilke speris thryes thre,
That welle is of musik and melodye
In this world here and cause of armonye.

Than bad he hym, syn erthe was so lyte
And ful of torment and of harde grace,
That he ne schulde hym in the world delyte,
Thanne tolde he hym, in certeyn yeris space
That every sterre shulde come into his place
Ther it was ferst, and al schulde out of mynde
That in this world is don of al mankynde.

Thanne preyede hym Cypyon to telle hym al
The weye to come into that hevene blis.
And he seyde, "Know thyself ferst inmortal,
And loke ay besyly thow werche and wysse
To comoun profit, and thow shat not mysse
To comyn swiftly to this place deere
That ful of blysse is and of soulys cleere.

But brekers of the lawe, soth to seyn,
And lykerous folk, aftyr that they ben dede,
Schul whirle aboute therthe alwey in peyne,
Tyl manye a world be passid, out of drede,
And that foryevyn is his weked dede.
Than shal they comyn into this blysful place,
To whiche to comyn, God the synde his grace."

The day gan faillen, and the derke nyght,
That revith bestis from here besynesse,
Berafte me my bok, for lak of lyght;
And to my bed I gan me for to dresse,
Fulfyld of thought and busy hevynesse;
For bothe I hadde thyng which that I nolde
And ek I ne hadde that thyng that I wolde.

65 was sumdel disseyvable & ful. 77 *of* (2) *om.* 78 brekeis. 80 there. 84 *the om.; his* us. 85 folwyn. 88 *bed* self. 90 *which om.* 91 *that* (1) *om.*

But fynally, my spirit at the laste,
Forwery of my labour al the day,
Tok reste, that made me to slepe faste;
And in my slep I mette, as that I lay,
How Affrican, ryght in the same aray
That Cipion hym say, byfore that tyde,
Was come, and stod right at my bedis syde.

The wery huntere, slepynge in his bed,
To wode agen his mynde goth anon;
The juge dremyth how hise pleis been sped;
The cartere dremyth how his carte is gon;
The riche of gold, the knyght fyght with his fon;
The syke met he drynkyth of the tunne;
The lovere met he hath his lady wonne.

Can I nat seyn if that the cause were
For I hadde red of Affrican byforen,
That made me to mete that he stod there;
But thus seyde he, "Thow hast the so wel born
In lokynge of myn olde bok byforn,
Of whiche Macrobye roughte nat a lyte,
That sumdel of thy labour wolde I quyte."

Cytherea, thow blysful lady swete,
That with thy ferbrond dauntist whom thow lest,
And madist me this swevene for to mete,
Be thow myn helpe in this, for thow mayst best;
As wisely as I seye the north-nor-west,
Whan I began my swevene for to write,
So yif me myght to ryme and ek tendyte.

This forseyde Affrican me hente anon,
And forth with hym unto a gate broughte
Ryght of a park, wallid of grene ston,
And ovyr the gatis with letteris large iwrowht,

108 theere. 113 Cythera.

There were vers iwreten as me thought,
On eythir syde, of ful gret difference,
Of which I schal now seyn the pleyn sentence.

"Thorw me men gon into that blysful place
Of hertis hele, and dedly woundis cure;
Thorw me men gon onto the welle of grace,
There grene and lusty May shal evere endure;
This is the weye to al good aventure,
Be glad, thow redere, and thy sorwe ofcaste.
Al opyn am I, passe in, and sped the faste!"

"Thorw me men gon," than spak that othir side,
"Onto the mortal strokis of the spere,
Of whiche Disdayn and Daunger is the gyde,
That nevere yit shal freut ne levys bere.
This strem yow ledith to the sorweful were
There as the fisch in prysoun is al drye;
Theschewyng is only the remedye."

These vers of gold and blak iwretyn were,
Of whiche I gan astonyd to beholde,
For whi, that on encresede ay my fere,
And with that othir gan myn herte bolde;
That on me hette, that othir dede me colde,
No wit hadde I for errour for to chese
To entre, or flen, or me to save, or lese.

Right as betwixsyn adamauntis two
Of evene myght a pece of yryn set
Ne hath no myght to meve too ne fro,
For what that on may hale, that othir let,
Ferde I, that nyste whethir me was bet
To entre or leve, til Affrycan, my gide,
Me hente, and shof in at the gatis wide.

124 iwrete. 132 overcaste. 134 spat. 138 *the om.* 140 Ther shewing. 141 wers. 152 best.

And seyde, "It stant writyn in thy face
Thyn errour, though thow telle it not to me;
But dred the not to come into this place,
For this writyng nys nothyng ment bi the,
Ne by non, but he lovys serwaunt be,
For thow of love hast lost thy stat, I gesse,
As sek man hath of swet and byttyrnesse.

But natheles, althow that thow be dul,
Yit that thow canst not do, yit mayst thow se,
For manye a man that may nat stonde a pul,
It likyth hym at wrastelyng for to be,
And demyn yit wher he do bet, or he,
And there if thow haddist cunnyng for tendite,
I shal the shewe mater for to wryte."

With that myn hand he tok in his anon,
Of whiche I confort kaughte, and went in faste;
But Lord, so I was glad and wel-begoon!
For overal where that I myne eyen caste
Were treis, clad with levys that ay shal laste,
Eche in his kynde of colour fresch and greene
As emeroude, that joye was to seene.

The byldere ok, and ek the hardy assh;
The pilere elm, the cofere unto carayne;
The boxtre pipere; holm, to whippis lasch;
The saylynge fyr; the cipresse, deth to pleyne;
The shetere ew; the asp, for shaftys pleyne;
The olyve of pes; and ek the dronke vyne;
The victor palm; the laurer to devyne.

A gardyn saw I, ful of blosmy bowys,
Upon a rever in a grene mede,
There as that swetnesse everemore inow is,
With flouris white, blewe, and yelwe, and rede,

161 hat. 170 *went in* that as. 183 blospemy. 185 *that* ther.

And colde welle-stremys nothyng dede,
That swemyn ful of smale fischis lighte,
With fynnys rede and skalis sylvyr bryghte.

On every bow the bryddis herde I synge
With voys of aungel in here armonye,
Som besyede hem here bryddis forth to brynge;
The litele conyes to here pley gunne hye;
And ferthere al aboute I gan aspye
The dredful ro, the buk and hert, and hynde,
Squyrelis and bestis smale of gentil kynde.

Of instreumentis of strengis in acord
Herde I so pleye, and ravyshyng swetnesse,
That God, that makere is of al, and lord,
Ne herde nevere betyr, as I gesse;
Therwith a wynd, onethe it myght be lesse,
Made in the levys grene a noyse softe,
Acordaunt to the bryddis song alofte.

The eire of that place so attempre was
That nevere was grevaunce of hot ne cold;
There wex ek every holsum spice and gres;
Ne no man may there waxe sek ne old,
Yit was there joye more a thousent fold
Than man can telle; ne nevere wolde it nyghte,
But ay cler day to ony manys syghte.

Undyr a tre besyde a welle I say
Cupide oure lord hise arwis forge and file,
And at his fet his bowe al redy lay,
And wel his doughtyr temperede al this whyle
The hevedis in the welle, and with hire wile
She couchede hem aftyr as they shulde serve,
Some for to sle, and some to wounde and kerve.

188 lite. 192 *Som* So. 204 erthe. 207 *ne om.;* waxe there. 216 *as om.*

Tho was I war of Plesaunce anon ryght,
And of Aray and Lust and Curteysie,
And of the Craft that can and hath the myght
To don be force a wight to don folye;
Disfigurat was she, I nyl nat lye,
And by hemself undyr an ok, I gesse,
Saw I Delyt that stod with Gentilesse.

I saw Beute, withoutyn ony atyr,
And Youthe, ful of game, and Jolyte,
Fool-hardynesse, and Flaterye, and Desyr,
Messagerye, and Meede, and other thre,[1]
Here namys shul not here be told for me;
And upon pileris greete of jasper longe,
I saw a temple of bras ifounded stronge.

Aboute that temple daunsedyn alwey
Wemen inowe, of whiche some ther were
Fayre of hemself, and some of hem were gay,
In kertelis al dischevele wente they there,
That was here offys, alwey yer be yeere;
And on the temple of dowvis white and fayre
Saw I syttynge manye an hunderede peyre.

Byfore the temple dore ful sobyrly
Dame Pes sat, with a curtyn in hire hond;
And by hire syde, wondyr discretly,
Dame Pacience syttynge there I fond,
With face pale, upon an hil of sond,
And aldirnext withinne and ek withoute
Byheste and Art and of here folk a route.

Withinne the temple of sykys hoote as fuyr
I herde a swow, that gan aboute renne,
Whiche sikis were engenderede with desyr,

221 before. [1]See Glossary.

That madyn every auter for to brenne
Of newe flaume, and wel espyed I thenne
That alle the cause of sorwe that they drye
Cam of the bittere goddesse Jelosye.

The god Priapus saw I, as I wente,
Withinne the temple in sovereyn place stonde
In swich aray as whan the asse hym shente
With cri be nyghte, and with septure in his honde.
Ful besyly men gunne asaye and fonde
Upon his hed to sette of sundery hewe
Garlondis ful of flourys fresche and newe.

And in a prive corner in desport,
Fond I Venus and hire porter Richesse,
That was ful noble and hautayn of hyre port;
Derk was that place, but aftyrward lightnesse
I saw a lyte, unnethe it myghte be lesse,
And on a bed of gold sche lay to reste,
Tyl that the hote sunne gan to weste.

Hyre gilte heris with a goldene thred
Ibounden were, untrussede as sche lay;
And nakyd from the brest up to the hed
Men myghte hyre sen, and sothly for to say
The remenaunt was wel keverede, to my pay,
Ryght with a subtyl covercheif of valence,
Ther nas no thikkere cloth of no defense.

The place yaf a thousent savouris sote,
And Bacus, god of wyn, sat hire besyde;
And Sereis next, that doth of hungir boote;
And, as I seyide, amyddis lay Cypride,
To wham on kneis two yonge folk there cryede
To ben here helpe; but thus I let hem lye,
And ferthere in the temple I gan espie

255 wan. 261 *Venus* Febus. 270 myghthe. 272 rygh.

That in dispit of Dyane the chaste
Ful manye a bowe ibroke hyng on the wal
Of maydenys, swiche as gunne here tymys waste
In hyre servyse; ipeyntede were overal
Ful manye a story, of whiche I touche shal
A fewe, as of Calyxte, and Athalante,
And manye a mayde, of whiche the name I wante.

Semyramus, Candace, and Hercules,
Biblis, Dido, Thisbe, and Piramus,
Tristram, Isaude, Paris, and Achilles,
Eleyne, Cliopatre, and Troylus,
Silla, and ek the modyr of Romulus,
Alle these were peyntid on that othir syde,
And al here love, and in what plyt they deyde.

Whan I was come agen unto the place
That I of spak, that was so sote and grene,
Forth welk I tho, myselvyn to solace.
Tho was I war, wher that ther sat a queene
That as of lyght the someris sunne shene
Passith the sterre, right so overmesure
She fayrere was than ony creature.

And in a launde, upon an hil of flouris,
Was set this noble goddesse Nature.
Of braunchis were here hallis and here bouris
Iwrought after here cast and here mesure;
Ne there nas foul that comyth of engendrure
That they ne were al prest in here presence
To take hire dom, and yeve hire audyence.

For this was on seynt Valentynys day,
Whan every bryd comyth there to chese his make,
Of every kynde that men thynke may,

286 Calyote. 291 Troylis. 299 lygh. 305 iwrough; mesuris. 309 Volantynys.

And that so huge a noyse gan they make
That erthe and eyr and tre and every lake
So ful was, that onethe was there space
For me to stonde, so ful was al the place.

And right as Aleyn in the Pleynt of Kynde
Devyseth Natur in aray and face,
In swich aray men myghte hire there fynde.
This nobil emperesse, ful of grace,
Bad every foul to take his owene place
As they were wonyd alwey fro yer to yeere,
Seynt Valentynys day to stondyn theere.

That is to seyn, the foulis of ravyne
Were heyest set, and thanne foulis smale
That etyn as hem Natur wolde enclyne,
As werm or thyng of which I telle no tale;
And watyr foul sat loueste in the dale;
But foul that lyvyth be sed sat on the grene,
And that so fele, that wondyr was to sene.

There myghte men the ryal egle fynde,
That with his sharpe lok persith the sunne,
And othere eglis of a lowere kynde,
Of whiche that clerkis wel devyse cunne;
Ther was the tiraunt with his federys dunne
And grey, I mene the goshauk, that doth pyne
To bryddis for his outrageous ravyne.

The gentyl facoun, that with his feet distraynyth
The kyngis hand; the hardy sperhauk eke,
The quaylis foo; the merlioun that paynyth
Hymself ful ofte the larke for to seke;
There was the douve, with hire eyen meke;
The jelous swan, ayens hire deth that syngith;
The oule ek, that of deth the bode bryngyth.

322 Volantynys. 316 righ. 326 *of which om.; no* my. 335 *And* A. 339 merilioun.

The crane geaunt, with his trompis soun;
The thef the choghe, and ek the jangelynge pye;
The skornynge jay; the elis fo, heroun;
The false lapwynge, ful of trecherye;
The starlyng, that the conseyl can bewreye;
The tame rodok, and the coward kyte;
The kok, that orloge is of thorpis lyte.

The sparwe, Venus sone; the nyghtyngale,
That clepith forth the grene levys newe;
The swalwe, mortherere of the flyes smale
That makyn hony of flouris frosche and newe;
The wedded turtil, with hire herte trewe;
The pokok, with his aungelis clothis bryghte;
The fesaunt, skornere of the cok be nyghte.

The wakyr goos, the cokkow most onkynde;
The popynjay, ful of delicasye;
The drake, stroyere of his owene kynde;
The stork, the wrekere of avouterye;
The hote cormeraunt of glotenye;
The raven wys; the crowe, with vois of care;
The thurstil old, the frosty feldefare.

What shulde I seyn? Of foulys every kynde
That in this world hath federis and stature
Men myghtyn in that place assemblede fynde
Byfore the noble goddesse, Nature.
And everiche of hem dede his besy cure
Benygnely to chese or for to take,
By hire acord, his formel or his make.

But to the poynt: Nature held on hire hond
A formele egle, of shap the gentilleste
That evere she among hire werkis fond,
The moste benygne, and the goodlieste.

345 *choghe* crowe. 353 *flyes* foulis. 363 wit..

In hire was everi vertu at his reste
So fer-forth, that Nature hireself hadde blysse
To loke on hire, and ofte hire bek to kysse.

Nature, vicarye o the almyghty lord
That hot, cold, hevy, lyght, moyst, and dreye
Hath knyt with evene noumberis of acord,
In esy voys gan for to speke and seye,
"Foulis, tak hed of my centence, I preye;
And for youre ese in fortheryng of youre nede,
As faste as I may speke, I wele yow speede.

Ye knowe wel, how Seynt Valentynys day
By my statute and thorw my governaunce,
Ye come for to cheese, and fle youre wey,
Youre makis, as I prike yow with plesaunce;
But natheles, my ryghtful ordenaunce
May I nat breke, for al this world to wynne,
That he that most is worthi shal begynne.

The terslet egle, as that ye knowe ful wel,
The foul ryal above every degre,
The wyse and worthi, secre, trewe as stel,
Whiche I have formyd, as ye may wel se,
In every part as it best likyth me,
It nedith not, his shap yow to devyse,
He shal ferst chese, and spekyn in his gyse.

And aftyr hym, by ordere shul ye chese
Aftyr youre kynde, everiche as ye lykyth,
And as youre hap is, shul ye wynne or lese.
But which of yow that love most entrikyth,
God synde hym hire that soryest for hym sykyth."
And therwithal the tersel gan she calle,
And seyde, "My sone, the choys is to yow falle.

384 yore (1). 400 *ye* they.

But natheles, in this condicioun
Mot be the choys of everich that is heere;
That she agre to his eleccioun,
What so he be, that shulde be hire feere.
This is oure usage alwey, fro yer to yeere;
And ho so may at this tyme have his grace,
In blisful tyme he cam into this place!"

With hed enclyned, and with humble cheere,
This ryal tersel spak, and tariede noht;
"Unto my sovereyn lady, and not my fere,
I chese, and ches with wil and herte and thought
The formel on youre hond, so wel iwrought;
Whos I am al, and evere wele hire serve,
Do what hire lest, to do me leve or sterve;

Besekynge hire of merci and of grace,
As she that is my lady sovereyne,
Or let me deye present in this place;
For certis, longe I may nat lyve in payne,
For in myn herte is korvyn every veyne,
And havynge only reward to my trouthe,
My dere herte, have of my wo sum routhe.

And if that I to hyre be founde untrewe,
Dishobeysaunt or wilful necligent,
Avauntour, or in proces love a newe,
I preye to yow this be my jugement,
That with these foulis be I al torent,
That ilke day that evere she me fynde
To hire untrewe or in my gilt unkynde.

And syn that hire lovyth non so wel as I,
Al be it that she me nevere of love beheete,
Thanne ouhte she be myn, thourgh hire mercy,

416 myn. 417 *ches* shes. 431 myn. 434 vntrere. 436 *she* he.

For othir bond can I non on hire knette,
Ne nevere for no wo ne shal I lette
To servyn hire, how fer so that she wende.
Say what yow leste, my tale is at an ende."

Ryght as the fresche rede rose newe
Ayen the somyr sunne coloured is,
Ryght so for shame al wexen gan hire hewe
Of this formel, whan she herde al this;
She neythir answerde wel, ne seyde amys,
So sore abashat was she, tyl that Nature
Seyde, "Doughter, drede the nought, I yow assure."

Anothir tersel egle spak anon
Of lower kynde, seyde, "That shal nat be;
I love hire bet than ye don, be Seynt Jon,
Or at the leste I love as wel as ye,
And longere have servyd hire in my degre;
And if she shulde a lovid for long lovynge,
To me fullonge hadde be the gerdonynge.

I dar ek seyn, if she me fynde fals,
Unkynde, or jangelere, or rebel ony wyse,
Or gelous, do me hangyn by the hals;
And but I bere me in hire servyse
As wel as that my wit can me suffyse
From poynt to poynt, hyre honour for to save,
Tak ye my lif, and al the good I have."

The thredde tercel egle answerde tho,
"Now, serys, ye seen the lytil leyser heere,
For every foul cryeth out to ben ago
Forth with his mak, or with his lady deere;
And ek Nature hireself ne wele not heere
For taryinge here not half that I wolde seye;
And but I speke, I mot for sorwe deye.

438 *knette* areete. 442 frosche. 460, 462 myn. 461 *to* in. 462 the.

Of long servyse avante I me nothing,
But as possible is me to deye today
For wo, as he that hath ben languyssynge
This twenty yeer, and as wel happyn may,
A man may servyn bet and more to pay
In half a yer althau it were no moore,
Than sum man doth, that servyd hath ful yoore.

I sey not this by me, for I ne can
Don no servyse that may my lady plese;
But I dar seyn, I am hire treweste man,
As to my dom, and fayneste wolde hire ese;
At shorte wordis, til that deth me sese
I wele ben heris, where I wake or wynke,
And trewe in al that herte may bethynke."

Of al myn lyf, syn that day I was born,
So gentil ple in love or othir thyng
Ne herde nevere no man me beforn,
Ho that hadde leyser and cunnyng
For to reherse hyre cher and hire spekyng;
And from the morwe gan this speche laste
Tyl dounward drow the sunne wondir faste.

The noyse of foulis for to ben delyvered
So loude ronge, "Have don, and lat us wende,"
That wel wende I, the wode hadde al toslyvered.
"Cum of," they criedyn, "Allas, ye wele us shende;
Whan shal youre cursede pletynge havyn an ende?
How shulde a juge eythir partie leve
For ye or nay, withoutyn othir preve?"

The goos, the cokkow, and the doke also
So cryede, "kek kek," "kokkow," "quek quek," hye,
That thourw myne erys the noyse wente tho.
The goos seyde, "Al this nys not worth a flye;

471 *But as* That; to me. 476 hath servyd. 482 *where* were. 494 shynde.

But I can shappe herof a remedie,
And I wele seye myn verdit fayre and swythe,
For watyr foul, ho so be wroth or blythe."

"And I for werm foul," quod the fol kokkowe,
"And I wele of myn owene autorite,
For comun profit tak the charge nowe,
For to delyvere us is gret charite."
"Ye may onbyde a while yit, perde,"
Quod the turtil, "if it be youre wille.
A wiht may speke, hym were as fayr ben stylle.

I am a sed foul, on the onworthieste,
That wot I wel, and litil of cunnynge;
But bet is, that a wyhtis tunge reste
Than entirmetyn hym of suche doinge
Of which he neythir rede can, ne fynde;
And who so doth ful foule, hymself acloyith,
For offys uncommyttid ofte anoyeth."

Nature, which that alwey hadde an ere
To murmur of the lewedenesse behynde,
With facound voys seyde, "Hold youre tungis, there,
And I shal sone, I hope, a conseyl fynde
Yow to delyvere and from this noyse unbynde.
I juge of every folk men shul on calle,
To seyn the verdit for yow foulys alle."

Assentid was to this conclusioun
The briddis alle, and foulis of ravyne
Han chosyn fyrst, by playn eleccioun,
The terselet of the facoun to diffyne
Al here centence, as hem leste to termyne,
And to nature hym gunne to presente;
And she acceptyth hym with glad entente.

507 *the charge nowe* on no carghowe. 511 *wiht* whit. 515 suhe. 518 *uncommyttid* onquit. 520 *behynde om.* 524 *of* on. 527 lauyne.

The terselet seyde than in this manere:
"Ful hard were it to prove by resoun
Who lovyth best this gentil formele heere,
For everych hath swich replicacioun
That non by skillis may been brought adoun.
I can not se that argumentis avayle;
Thanne semyth it there muste be batayle."

"Al redy!" quod this eglis terslet tho.
"Nay, seris," quod he, "if that I durste it seye,
Ye don me wrong, myn tale is not ido,
For, seris, ne takith not a-gref, I preye,
It may not gon as ye wolde in this weye;
Oure is the voys that han the charg on honde,
And to the jugis dom ye motyn stonde.

And therfore pes; I seye, as to myn wit
Me wolde thynke how that the worthiest
Of knyghthod and lengest hath used it,
Most of estat, of blod the gentilleste,
Were sittyngest for hire, if that her leste;
And of these thre she wot hireself, I trowe,
Whiche that he be, for it is light to knowe."

The watyr foulis han here hedis leid
Togedere, and of a short avysement
Whan everryche hadde his large gole seyd,
They seydyn, sothly, al be on assent,
How that the goos with hire facounde so gent,
"That so desyrith to pronounce oure nede,
Shal telle oure tale," and preyede God hym spede.

As for these watyr foulis tho began
The goos to speke, and in his kakelynge
He seyde, "Pes, now tak kep, every man,
And herkenyth which a resoun I shal brynge.

533 terslet; *than om.* 551 *her* he. 553 *it* here.

Myn wit is sharp, I love no taryinge;
I seye, I rede hym, thow he were myn brothir,
But she wele love hym, let hym take anothir."

"Lo, here a perfit resoun of a goos!"
Quod the sperhauk, "nevere mot he the!
Lo, sich it is to have a tunge loos.
Now, perde, fol, now were it bet for the
Han holde thyn pes, than shewe thyn nysete!
It lyth nat in his myght, ne in his wille,
But soth is seyd, a fol can not ben stille."

The laughtere aros of gentil foulis alle,
And right anon the sed foul chosyn hade
The turtel trewe, and gunne hire to hem calle,
And preyede hire for to seyn the sothe sadde
Of this matere, and axsede what she radde.
And she answerde, that, pleynly, hire entente
She wolde it shewe, and sothly what she mente.

"Nay, God forbede a lovere shulde chaunge,"
The turtel seyde, and wex for shame red,
"Thow that his lady evere more be straunge,
Yit lat hym serve hire, til that he be ded.
Forsothe I preyse nat the gosis red;
For thow sche deyede, I wolde non othir make,
I wele ben hire til that the deth me take."

"Wel bordit!" quod the doke, "by myn hat!
That men shul lovyn alwey causeles,
Who can a resoun fynde, or wit, in that?
Daunsith he murye that is myrtheles?
What shulde I rekke of hym that is recheles?
Kek kek," yit seith the doke, ful wel and fayre,
"There been mo sterris, God wot, than a payre!"

573 mygh. 576 righ. 579 rardde. 577, 583 tersel.

"Now, fy, cherl," quod the gentil terselet,
"Out of the donghil cam that word ful right;
Thow canst nat seen what thyng is wel beset;
Thow farst by love as oulys don by lyght,
The day hem blent, but wel they sen be nyght.
Thy kynde is of so low a wrechednesse
That what love is, thow canst nat seen ne gesse."

Tho gan the kokkow putte hym forth in pres
For foul that etith werm, and seyde blyve,
"So I," quod he, "may have my make in pes,
I reche nat how longe that ye stryve,
Lat eche of hem ben soleyn al here lyve,
This is myn red, syn they may nat acorde,
This shorte lessoun nedith nat recorde."

"Ye, have the glotoun fild inow his paunche,
Thanne are we wel," seyde thanne a merlioun,
"Thow mortherere of the heysoge on the braunche
That broughte the forth, thow reutheles glotoun,
Leve thow soleyn, wermes corupcioun,
For no fors is of lak of thy nature;
Go, lewed be thow, whil that the world may dure!"

"Now pes," quod Nature, "I comaunde here,
For I have herd al youre opynyoun,
And in effect yit be we not the nere;
But fynally, this is my conclusioun,
That she hireself shal han the eleccioun
Of whom hire lest, and who be wroth and blythe,
Hym that she chesith, he shal hire han as swithe.

For syn it may not here discussid be
Who lovyth hire best, as seyth the terselet,
Thanne wele I don hire this favour, that she

596 *fy* sey; terslet. 600 nygh. 601 wrechednese. 602 gese. 604 blythe. 613 reufulles. 614 werm. 623 *as* a. 625 terslet.

Shal han hym on hom hire herte is set,
And he hire, that his herte hath on hire knet,
Thus juge I Nature, for I may not lye
To non estat, I have non othir eye.

But as for conseyl for to chese a make,
If, I were Resoun, certis, thanne wolde I
Conseyle yow the ryal tersel take,
As seyde the terselet, ful skylfully,
As for the gentilleste and most worthi,
Which I have wrought so wel to my plesaunce,
That to yow oughte to been a suffisaunce."

With dredful vois the formel tho answerde,
"My rightful lady, goddesse of Nature,
Soth is that I am evere undyr youre yerde,
As is anothir lyvis creature,
And mot ben youre, whil that my lyf may dure;
And therfore grauntyth me my ferste bone,
And myn entent that wele I seyn wol sone."

"I graunte it yow," quod she, and than a-non
This formel egle spak in this degre:
"Almyghty queen, unto this yer be gon,
I axe respit for to avise me,
And aftyr that to have my choys al fre;
This al and sum that I wele speke and seye,
Ye gete no more al thow ye do me deye.

I wele nat serve Venus ne Cupide
Forsothe as yit, be no manere weye."
"Now syn it may non othirwise betyde,"
Quod tho Nature, "heere is no more to seye,
Thanne wolde I that these foulis were aweye,
Eche with his make, for taryinge lengere heere,"—
And seyde hem thus, as ye shul aftyr here.

628 knyt. 645 *than* that. 658 *hem* hym.

"To yow speke I, ye tersletis," quod Nature,
"Beth of good herte and servyth, alle thre;
A yer ne is nat so longe to endure,
And eche of yow peignynge in his degre
For to do wel; for God wot quit is she
For yow this yer, what aftyr so befalle,
This entyrmes is dressid for yow alle."

And whan this werk al brought was to an ende,
To every foul Nature yaf his make
By evene acord, and on here weye they wende.
But lord, the blisse and joye that they make,
For ech gan othir in his wyngis take,
And with here nekkis eche gan othyr wynde,
Thankynge alwey the noble queen of kynde.

But fyrst were chosyn foulis for to synge,
As yer be yer was alwey the usance
To synge a roundele at here departynge,
To don to Nature honour and plesaunce;
The note, I trow, imakid were in Fraunce.
The wordis were sweche as ye may fynde
The nexte vers, as I now have in mynde.

Nowe welcome somer, with thy sonne softe,
That hast thes wintres wedres ovire-shake,
And drevyne away the longe nyghtes blake.

Saynt Valentyne that ert ful hye olofte,
Thus syngen smale foules for thy sake
Nowe welcome somer, with thy sonne softe,
That hast thes wintres wedres ovire-shake.

Wele han they cause forto gladen ofte
Sethe ech of hem recoverede hathe hys make,
Ful blisseful mowe they ben when they wake.

663 *quit* what. 680 *thy om.*

Nowe welcome somer, with thy sonne softe,
That hast thes wintres wedres ovire-shake,
And drevyne away the longe nyghtes blake.

And with the shoutyng, whan the song was do,
That foulys madyn at here flyght awey
I wok, and othere bokys tok me to
To rede upon; and yit I rede alwey
In hope, I wis, to rede so sum day
That I shal mete sum thyng for to fare
The bet, and thus to rede I nele nat spare.

Explicit parliamentum Auium In die sancti Valentini tentum secundum Galfridum Chaucer. Deo gracias.

694 the foulys.

THE LEGEND OF GOOD WOMEN

The Prologue.

[A Version, Later.]

A thousent sythis have I herd men telle
That there is joye in hevene, and peyne in helle,
And I acorde wel that it be so;
But natheles, this wit I wel also,
That there ne is non that dwellyth in this cuntre
That eythir hath in helle or hevene ibe,
Ne may of it non othere weyis wytyn,
But as he hath herd seyd, or founde it wrytyn,
For by asay there may no man it preve.
But Goddis forbode, but men schulde leve
Wel more thyng than men han seyn with eye!
Men schal nat wenyn every thyng a lye
For that he say it nat of yore ago;
God wot, a thyng is nevere the lesse so,
Thow every wyght ne may it nat ise;
Bernard the monk ne say nat al, parde!
Thanne motyn we to bokys that we fynde,
Thourw whiche that olde thyngis ben in mynde,
And to the doctryne of these olde wyse
Yevyn credence, in every skylful wyse,
And trowyn on these olde aprovede storyis
Of holynesse, of regnys, of victoryis,
Of love, of hate, of othere sundery thyngis,
Of whiche I may nat make rehersyngys.
And if that olde bokis weryn aweye,
Iloryn were of remembrance the keye.
Wel oughte us thanne on olde bokys leve,
Thereas there is non othyr asay be preve.
And as for me, thow that myn wit be lite,
On bokys for to rede I me delyte,
And in myn herte have hem in reverence,
And to hem yeve swich lust and swich credence
That there is wel onethe game non
That from my bokys make me to gon,

34 myne (and elsewhere in this MS.).

THE LEGEND OF GOOD WOMEN

The prologe of .ix. goode Wymmen.

[B Version, Earlier.]

A thousande tymes I have herd telle
That ther ys joy in hevene, and peyne in helle,
And I acorde wel that it ys so;
But netheles, yet wot I wel also,
That ther is noon duellyng in this contree
That eythir hath in hevene or helle y-be,
Ne may of hit noon other weyes witen,
But as he hath herd seyde or founde it writen,
For by assay ther may no man it preve.
But God forbede, but men shulde leve
Wel more thing then men han seen with eye!
Men shal not wenen every thing a lye
But yf himselfe yt seeth, or elles dooth;
For God wot, thing is never the lasse sooth,
Thogh every wight ne may it nat ysee;
Bernarde the monke ne saugh nat all, pardee!
Than mote we to bokes that we fynde,
Thurgh which that olde thinges ben in mynde,
And to the doctrine of these olde wyse
Yeve credence, in every skylful wise,
That tellen of these olde appreved stories,
Of holynesse, of regnes, of victories,
Of love, of hate, of other sondry thynges,
Of whiche I may not maken rehersynges.
And yf that olde bokes were awey,
Yloren were of remembraunce the key.
Wel ought us thanne honouren and beleve
These bokes, there we han noon other preve.
And as for me, though that I konne but lyte,
On bokes for to rede I me delyte,
And to hem yive I feyth and ful credence,
And in myn herte have hem in reverence
So hertely, that ther is game noon
That fro my bokes maketh me to goon,

2 *That om.* 3 acord. 6 or in. 26 ylorne. 33 hertly.

But it be other upon the halyday,
Or ellis in the joly tyme of May;
Whan that I here the smale foulys synge,
And that the flouris gynne for to sprynge,
Farwel, my stodye, as lastynge that sesoun!
Now have I therto this condycyoun
That of alle the flouris in the mede
Thanne love I most these flouris white and rede
Swyche as men calle dayesyis in oure toun;
To hem have I so gret affeccioun,
As I seyde erst, whan comyn is the May
That in myn bed there dawith me no day
That I ne am up, and walkynge in the mede
To sen these flouris agen the sunne to sprede
Whan it upryseth be the morwe schene,
The longe day thus walkynge in the grene.

And whan the sunne gynnys for to weste
Thanne closeth it, and drawith it to reste,
So sore it is aferid of the nyght,
Til on the morwe, that it is dayis lyght;
This dayeseye, of alle flouris flour,
Fulfyld of vertu and of alle honour,
And evere ilike fayr and fresch of hewe,
As wel in wyntyr as in somyr newe
Fayn wolde I preysyn if I coude, aryght;
But wo is me, it lyth nat in myn myght!

For wel I wot, that folk han here beforn
Of makynge ropyn, and lad awey the corn.

51 begynnys. 57 frosch.

But yt be seldom on the holyday;
Save certeynly, whan that the monethe of May
Is comen, and that I here the foules synge,
And that the floures gynnen for to sprynge,
Fairewel my boke and my devocioun.
Now have I thanne suche a condicioun,
That of al the floures in the mede
Thanne love I most thise floures white and rede,
Suche as men callen daysyes in her toune.
To hem have I so grete affeccioun,
As I seyde erst, whanne comen is the May,
That in my bed ther daweth me no day
That I nam uppe and walkyng in the mede,
To seen this floure ayein the sonne sprede,
Whan it uprysith erly by the morwe.
That blisful sighte softneth al my sorwe;
So glad am I, whan that I have presence
Of it, to doon it alle reverence,
As she that is of alle floures flour,
Fulfilled of al vertue and honour,
And evere-ilyke faire and fressh of hewe,
And I love it, and ever ylike newe,
And evere shal til that myn herte dye;
Al swere I nat, of this I wol nat lye,
Ther loved no wight hotter in his lyve.
And whan that hit ys eve, I renne blyve,
As sone as evere the sonne gynneth weste,
To seen this flour, how it wol go to reste,
For fere of nyght, so hateth she derknesse!

Hire chere is pleynly sprad in the brightnesse
Of the sonne, for ther yt wol unclose.
Allas, that I ne had Englyssh, ryme or prose,
Suffisant this flour to preyse aryght!
But helpeth, ye that han konnyng and myght,
Ye lovers, that kan make of sentiment;
In this case oghte ye be diligent
To forthren me somwhat in my labour,
Whethir ye ben with the leef or with the flour.
For wel I wot that ye han herbiforne
Of makynge ropen, and lad awey the corne;

50 sight. 52, 53 al. 57 hert. 69 sentment. 70 ght.

I come aftyr, glenynge here and ther,
And am ful glad if I may fynde an er
Of ony goodly word that they han laft.
And if it happe me rehersen eft
That they han in here fresche songis said,
I hope that they wele nat ben evele apayed;
Sithe it is seyd in fortheryng and honour
Of hem that eythir servyn lef or flour.
For trustyth wel, I ne have nat undyrtake
As of the lef agayn the flour to make,
Ne of the flour to make ageyn the lef,
No more than of the corn agen the shef;
For as to me is lefere non ne lothere,
I am witholde yit with never nothire;
I not ho servyth lef ne who the flour,
That nys nothyng the entent of my labour.
For this werk is al of anothyr tunne
Of olde story er swich strif was begunne.

But wherfore that I spak to yeve credence
To bokys olde, and don hem reverence,
Is for men schulde autoriteis beleve
There as there lyth non othyr asay be preve;
For myn entent is, or I fro yow fare,
The nakede tixt in Englis to declare
Of manye a story, or ellis of manye a geste,
As autourys seyn, levyth hem if yow leste.

Whan passed was almost the monyth of May,
And I hadde romed al the somerys day
The grene medewe, of which that I yow tolde,
Upon the fresche dayseie to beholde,
And that the sonne out of the south gan weste,
And clothede was the flour, and gon to reste
For derknese of the nyht of which sche dradde,
Hom to myn hous ful swiftly I me spadde,
And in a lytyl erber that I have

66 reherse. 67, etc., frosch. 80 old. 93 souht.

And I come after, glenyng here and there,
And am ful glad yf I may fynde an ere
Of any goodly word that ye han left.
And thogh it happen me rehercen eft
That ye han in your fresshe songes sayede,
Forbereth me, and beth nat evele apayede,
Syn that ye see I do yt in the honour
Of love, and eke in service of the flour
Whom that I serve, as I have witte or myght.
She is the clerenesse and the verray lyght,
That in this derke worlde me wynt and ledyth.
The hert inwith my sorwfull brest yow dredith
And loveth so sore, that ye ben verrayly
The maistresse of my witte and no thing I.
My worde, my werkes, ys knyt so in youre bond,
That as an harpe obeieth to the hond,
And maketh it soune after his fyngerynge,
Ryght so mowe ye oute of myn herte bringe
Swich vois, ryght as yow lyst to laughe or pleyn,
Be ye my gide and lady sovereyn;
As to myn erthely god, to yowe I calle,
Bothe in this werke, and in my sorwes alle.
But wherfore that I spake, to yive credence
To olde stories, and doon hem reverence
And that men mosten more thyng beleve
Then men may seen at eighe, or elles preve?
That shal I seyn, whanne that I see my tyme;
I may not al attones speke in ryme.
My besy gost, that thrusteth alwey newe
To seen this flour so yong, so fressh of hewe,
Constreyned me with so gledy desire,
That in myn herte I feele yet the fire
That made me to ryse, er yt wer day,
(And this was now the firste morwe of May),
With dredful hert and glad devocioun
For to ben at the resureccioun
Of this flour whan yt shulde unclose
Agayne the sonne, that roos as rede as rose;
That in the brest was of the beste that day
That Agenores doghtre ladde away.

79 fressh. 92 hert. 96 *in* (2) *om.* 102 *al om.* 108 *this om.*

Ibenchede newe with turwis fresche i-grawe,
I bad men schulde me my couche make;
For deynte of the newe somerys sake,
I bad hem strowe flouris on myn bed.
Whan I was layd, and hadde myn eyen hid,
I fel aslepe withinne an our or two.
Me mette, how I was in the medewe tho
And that I romede in that same gyse
To sen that flour as ye han herd devyse.
Fayr was this medewe, as thoughte me, overal,
With flouris sote enbroudit was it al,
As for to speke of gomme, or erbe, or tre,
Comparisoun may non imakede be;
For it surmountede pleynly alle odours
And eek of ryche beute alle flourys.
Forgetyn hadde the erthe his pore estat
Of wyntyr, that hym nakede made and mat,
And with his swerd of cold so sore hadde grevyd;
Now hadde the tempre sonne al that relevyd,
And clothede hym in grene al newe ageyn.
The smale foulis, of the seson fayn,
That from the panter and the net ben skapid,
Upon the foulere that hem made awapid
In wyntyr, and distroyed hadde hire brod,
In his dispit hem thoughte it dede hem good
To synge of hym, and in here song despise
The foule cherl, that for his covetyse
Hadde hem betrayed with his sophistrye.
This was here song, "The foulere we defye!"
Some songyn layes on the braunchis clere
Of love and May, that joye it was to here,
In worschepe and in preysyng of hire make,
And of the newe blysful somerys sake,

That sungyn, "Blyssede be Seynt Volentyn!
At his day I ches yow to be myn,
Withoute repentynge, myn herte swete!"
And therwithal here bekys gunne mete.
The honour and the humble obeysaunces
They dede, and after othere observauncys

127 *layes om.* 128 *May om.* 135 obeysaunce. 136 And after dedyn.

And doune on knes anoon-ryght I me sette,
And, as I koude, this fresshe flour I grette,
Knelyng alwey til it unclosed was
Upon the smale, softe, swote gras,
That was with floures swote enbrouded al
Of swich suetnesse, and swich odour over-al,
That for to speke of gomme, or herbe, or tree,
Comparisoun may noon ymaked bee;
For yt surmounteth pleynly alle odoures,
And eek of riche beaute alle floures.
Forgeten had the erthe his pore estate
Of wyntir, that hem naked made and mate,
And with his swerd of colde so sore greved;
Now hath thatempre sonne all that releved
That naked was, and clad yt new agayn.
The smale foules, of the seson fayn,
That of the panter and the nette ben scaped,
Upon the foweler that hem made awhaped
In wynter, and distroyed hadde hire broode,
In his dispite hem thoghte yt did hem goode
To synge of hym, and in hir songe dispise
The foule cherle, that for his covetise
Had hem betrayed with his sophistrye.
This was hire songe, "The foweler we deffye
And al his crafte," and somme songen clere
Layes of love, that joye it was to here,
In worshipynge, and in preysinge of hir make,
And for the newe blisful somers sake.
Upon the braunches, ful of blosmes softe,
In hire delyt they turned hem ful ofte,
And songen, "Blessed be Seynt Valentyne,
For on his day I chees yow to be myne,
With-outen repentyng, myn herte swete!"
And therwithalle hire bekes gonnen meete,
Yeldyng honour and humble obeysaunces
To love, and diden hire othere observaunces

116 fressh. 124 *alle* of; *eek om.* 147 hert.

Ryht plesyng onto Love and to Nature,
So eche of hem doth wel to cryatur.
This song to herken I dede al myn entent,
For why, I mette I wiste what they ment. 140

137 *plesyng om.;* nature. 138 *doth wel om.;* cryaturys. 139 herkenyn.

That longeth onto Love, and to Nature;—
Construeth that as yow lyst, I do no cure.
And thoo that hadde doon unkyndenesse,
As dooth the tydif, for newfangelnesse
Besoghte mercy of hir trespassynge,
And humblely songen hire repentynge,
And sworen on the blosmes to be trewe,
So that hire makes wolde upon hem rewe;
And at the laste maden hire acord,
Al founde they Daunger for a tyme a lord;
Yet Pitee, thurgh his stronge gentil myght,
Forgaf, and maked mercy passen ryght,
Thurgh innocence and ruled curtesye.
But I ne clepe nat innocence folye,
Ne fals pitee, for vertue is the mene,
As Etike seith, in swich maner I mene.
And thus thise foweles, voide of al malice,
Acordeden to love, and laften vice
Of hate, and songen alle of oon acorde,
"Welcome, somer, oure governour and lorde!"
And Zepherus and Flora gentilly
Yaf to the floures, softe and tenderly,
Hire swoote breth, and made hem for to sprede,
As god and goddesse of the floury mede,
In whiche me thoght I myghte day by day
Duellen alwey, the joly monyth of May,
Withouten slepe, withouten mete or drynke.
Adoune ful softely I gan to synke,
And lenynge on myn elbowe and my syde,
The longe day I shoope me for tabide,
For nothing ellis, and I shal nat lye,
But for to loke upon the daysie;
That men by reson wel it calle may
The daisie, or elles the ye of day,
The emperice and floure of floures alle;
I pray to God, that faire mote she falle,
And alle that loven floures for hire sake!
  But natheles, ne wene nat that I make
In preysing of the flour agayn the leef,
No more than of the corne agayn the sheef,
For as to me, nys lever noon ne lother,

153 unkyndnesse. 156 songe. 162 mad. 164 yt nat. 169 songe. 175 myght.

Tyl at the laste a larke song above,
"I se," quod she, "the myghty God of Love;
Lo yond he comyth, I se hise wyngis sprede!"
Tho gan I loken endelong the mede,
And saw hym come and in his hond a quene
Clothid in ryal abyte, al of grene.
A frette of goold sche hadde, next hyre her,
And upon that a whit corone sche ber
With many flourys, and I schal nat lye;
For al the world, ryght as the dayseye
Icorounede is with white levys lite,
Swiche were the flourys of hire corone white.
For of o perle fyn and oryental
Hyre white coroun was imakyd al;
For whiche the white coroun above the grene
Made hire lyk a dayseye for to sene,
Considerede ek the fret of gold above.
Iclothede was this myhty God of Love
Of silk, ibroudede ful of grene grevys,
A garlond on his hed of rose levys
Stekid al with lylye flourys newe.
But of his face I can not seyn the hewe;
For sekyrly, his face schon so bryhte
That with the glem astonede was the syhte,
A furlongwey I myhte hym not beholde.

143 loke. 149 mane.

I nam withholden yit with never nother
Ne I not who serveth leef ne who the flour;
Wel browken they her service or labour,
For this thing is al of another tonne
Of olde storye, er swiche thinge was begonne.
Whan that the sonne out of the south gan west,
And that this floure gan close and goon to rest,
For derknesse of the nyght, the which she dred,
Home to myn house ful swiftly I me sped,
To goon to reste, and erly for to ryse,
To seen this flour sprede, as I devyse,
And in a litel herber that I have,
That benched was on turves fressh ygrave,
I bad men sholde me my couche make;
For deyntee of the newe someres sake,
I bad hem strawen floures on my bed.
Whan I was leyde, and had myn eyen hed,
I fel on slepe inwith an houre or twoo.
Me mette how I lay in the medewe thoo,
And from afer come walkyng in the mede,
To seen this flour that I love so and drede,
The God of Love and in his hande a quene,
And she was clad in real habite grene.
A fret of gold she hadde next her heer,
And upon that a white coroune she beer,
With flourouns smale, and I shal nat lye,
For al the worlde ryght as a daysye
Ycorouned ys with white leves lyte,
So were the flowrouns of hire coroune white;
For of o perle fyne, oriental,
Hire white coroune was imaked al;
For which the white coroune above the grene
Made hire lyke a daysie for to sene,
Considered eke hir fret of golde above.
Yclothed was this myghty God of Love
In silke, enbrouded ful of grene greves,
Inwith a fret of rede rose leves,
The fresshest syn the worlde was first bygonne;
His gilte here was corowned with a sonne,
Istede of golde for hevynesse and wyght.
Therwith me thoght his face shoon so bryght
That wel unnethes myght I him beholde,

192 mother. 215 had. 216 corwne.

But at the laste in hande I saw hym holde
Two fery dartis, as the gleedys rede,
And aungellych hyse wengis gan he sprede.
And al be that men seyn that blynd is he,
Algate me thoughte he myghte wel ise,
For sternely on me he gan beholde
So that his lokynge doth myn herte colde.
And be the hond he held the noble quene
Corouned with whit and clothede al in grene,
So womanly, so benygne, and so meke,
That in this world thow that men wolde seke,
Half hire beute schulde men nat fynde
In cryature that formede is be kynde.
Hire name was Alceste the debonayre,
I preye to God, that evere falle sche fayre!
For ne hadde confort been of hire presence,
I hadde be ded, withoutyn ony defence,
For dred of Lovys wordys and his chere,
As, whan tyme is, hereaftyr ye schal here.
Byhynde this God of Love, upon this grene,
I saw comynge of ladyis nynetene,
In ryal abyte, a ful esy pas,
And aftyr hem come of wemen swich a tras
That syn that God Adam made of erthe,
The thredde part of wemen, ne the ferthe,
Ne wende I not by possibilite,
Haddyn evere in this world ibe,
And trewe of love these wemen were echon.
Now whether was that a wondyr thyng or non,
That ryht anon, as that they gunne espye
This flour, whiche that I clepe the dayseye,
Ful sodeynly they styntyn alle atonys,
And knelede adoun, as it were for the nonys,
And aftyr that they wentyn in cumpas
Daunsynge aboute this flour an esy pas,
And songyn, as it were, in carolewyse,
This balade, whiche that I schal yow devyse.

167 *Two* Tho. 172 both. 178 In on. 179 thebonayre.

And in his hande me thoght I saugh him holde
Twoo firy dartes, as the gledes rede,
And aungelyke hys wynges saugh I sprede.
And al be that men seyn that blynd ys he,
Algate me thoghte that he myghte se,
For sternely on me he gan byholde,
So that his loking dooth myn herte colde.
And by the hande he helde this noble quene,
Corowned with white and clothed al in grene,
So womanly, so benigne, and so meke
That in this world thogh that men wolde seke,
Half of hire beaute shulde men nat fynde
In creature that formed ys by kynde.

And therfore may I seyn, as thynketh me,
This songe, in preysyng of this lady fre.

238 thoght, myght. 240 hert. 244 *wolde seke om.* 245 MS. has only *nat fynde.*

[*Balade.*]

Hyd Absalon, thy gilte tressis clere;
Ester, ley thow thy meknesse al adoun;
Hyde, Jonathas, al thy frendely manere;
Penolope, and Marcia Catoun,
Mak of youre wyfhood no comparisoun;
Hyde ye youre beuteis, Ysoude and Elene,
Alceste is here, that al that may destene.

Thy fayre body, lat it nat apeere,
Laveyne, and thow, Lucresse of Rome Toun,
And Pollexene, that boughte love so dere,
Ek Cleopatre with al thy passioun,
Hide ye youre trouth in love and youre renoun;
And thow, Tysbe, that hast for love swich peyne,
Alceste is here, that al that may desteyne.

Herro, Dido, Laodomya, alle in fere,
Ek Phillis hangynge for thyn Demophoun,
And Canace, espied be thy chere,
Ysiphile, bytrayed with Jasoun,
Mak of youre trouthe in love no bost ne soun;
Nor Ypèrmystre or Adriane, ne pleyne;
Alceste is here, that al that may disteyne.

Whan that this balade al isongyn was,

203, etc., thyne, thyn. 214 ronoun.

Hyde, Absolon, thy gilte tresses clere;
Ester, ley thou thy mekenesse al adowne;
Hyde, Jonathas, al thy frendly manere;
Penalopee and Marcia Catoun,
Make of youre wifhode no comparysoun;
Hyde ye youre beautes, Ysoude and Eleyne;
My lady comith, that al this may disteyne.

Thy faire body, lat yt nat appere,
Lavyne; and thou, Lucresse of Rome toune,
And Polixene, that boghten love so dere;
And Cleopatre with al thy passyon,
Hyde ye your trouthe of love and your renoun;
And thou Tesbe, that hast of love suche peyne,
My lady comith, that al this may disteyne.

Herro, Dido, Laudomia, alle y-fere,
And Phillis hangyng for thy Demophon,
And Canace espied by thy chere,
Ysiphile, betraysed with Iason,
Maketh of your trouthe neythir boost ne soune;
Nor Ypermystre or Adriane, ye tweyne,
My lady cometh, that al this may dysteyne.

This balade may ful wel y-songen be,
As I have seyde erst, by my lady free;
For certeynly, al thise mowe nat suffise
To apperen wyth my lady, in no wyse.
For as the sonne wole the fire disteyne,
So passeth al my lady sovereyne,

That ys so good, so faire, so debonayre;
I prey to God, that ever falle hire faire!
For nadde comfort ben of hire presence,
I hadde ben dede withouten any defence,
For drede of Loves wordes and his chere;
As when tyme ys, herafter ye shal here.
Behynde this God of Love, upon the grene,
I saugh comyng of ladyes nientene

254 Elyene.

Upon the softe and sote grene gras
They settyn hem ful softely adoun,
By ordere alle in cumpas, alle enveroun.
Fyrst sat the God of Love, and thanne this queene,
With the white corone clad in grene,
And sithyn al the remenant by and by,
As they were of degre, ful curteysly;
Ne nat a word was spokyn in that place
The mountenaunce of a furlongwey of space.
I, lenynge faste by undyr a bente,
Abod to knowe what this peple mente,
As stille as ony ston; til at the laste
The God of Love on me his eye caste,
And seyde, "Ho restith there?" and I answerde
Unto his axsynge, whan that I hym herde,
And seyde, "Sere, it am I"; and cam hym ner,
And salewede hym. Quod he, "What dost thow her
In my presence, and that so boldely?
For it were bettere worthi trewely
A werm to comen in my syht than thow."
"And why, sere?" quod I, "and it lyke yow?"
"For thow," quod he, "art therto nothyng able;
My servauntis ben alle wyse and honourable,
Thow art my mortal fo, and me warreyest,
And of myne olde servauntis thow mysseyst,
And hynderyst hem with thy translacyoun,
And lettist folk to han devocyoun

227 in veroun. 244 come.

In real habite, a ful esy paas;
And after hem coome of wymen swich a traas,
That syn that God Adam hadde made of erthe,
The thirdde part of mankynde, or the ferthe,
Ne wende I not by possibilitee
Had ever in this wide worlde ybee.
And trewe of love thise women were echon.
Now wheither was that a wonder thing or non,
That ryght anoon as that they gonne espye
Thys flour, which that I clepe the daysie,
Ful sodeynly they stynten al attones,
And knelede doune, as it were for the nones,
And songen with o vois, "Heel and honour
To trouthe of womanhede, and to this flour
That bereth our alder pris in figurynge;
Hire white corowne beryth the witnessynge."
And with that word, acompas enviroun,
They setten hem ful softly adoun.
First sat the God of Love, and syth his quene
With the white corowne, clad in grene;
And sithen al the remenaunt by and by,
As they were of estaat, ful curteysly;
Ne nat a worde was spoken in the place
The mountaunce of a furlong wey of space.
I, knelyng by this floure in good entente,
Aboode to knowen what this peple mente,
As stille as any ston; til at the last
This God of Love on me hyse eighen caste,
And seyde, "Who kneleth there?" and I answerde
Unto his askynge, whan that I it herde,
And seyde, "Sir, it am I," and come him nere,
And salwed him. Quod he, "What dostow here
So nygh myn oune floure so boldely?
Yt were better worthy trewely
A worme to neghen ner my flour than thow."
"And why, sire?" quod I, "and yt lyke yow?"
"For thow," quod he, "art therto nothing able.
Yt is my relyke, digne and delytable,
And thow my foo, and al my folke werreyest,
And of myn olde servauntes thow mysseyest,
And hynderest hem with thy translacioun,
And lettest folke from hire devocioun

294 styten. 297 *To* (1) The. 314 *Sir om.* 317 trewly.

To servyn me, and haldist it folye
To troste on me, thow mayst it nat denye,
For in pleyn tixt, it nedyth nat to glose,
Thow hast translatid the Romauns of the Rose,
That is an eresye ageyns my lawe,
And makyst wise folk fro me withdrawe.
And thynkist in thy wit, that is ful cole,
That he nys but a verray propre fole
That lovyth paramouris to harde and hote.
Wel wot I therby, thow begynnyst dote,
As olde folis whan here spiryt faylyth.
Thanne blame they folk, and wete nat what hem ealyth!
Hast thow nat mad in Englys ek the bok
How that Crisseyde Troylis forsok,
In schewynge how that wemen han don mis?
Bit natheles, answere me now to this,
Why noldist thow as wel a seyd goodnes
Of wemen, as thow hast seyd wekedenes?
Was there no good matyr in thy mynde,
Ne in alle thy bokys ne coudist thow nat fynde
Sum story of wemen, that were goode and trewe?
Yis, God wot sixty bokys olde and newe
Hast thow thyself, alle ful of storyis grete,
That bothe Romaynys and ek Grekis trete
Of sundery wemen, whiche lyf that they ladde,
And evere an hunderede goode ageyn on badde.
This knowith God, and alle clerkis ek,
That usyn sweche materis for to sek.
What seith Valerye, Titus, or Claudyan?
What seith Jerome agayns Jovynyan?
How clene maydenys and how trewe wyvys,
How stedefaste wedewys durynge alle here lyvys
Tellyth Jerome; and that nat of a fewe,
But I dar seyn an hunderede on a rewe,
That it is pete for to rede, and routhe,
The wo that they endure for here trouthe.
For to hyre love were they so trewe,
That rathere than they wolde take a newe,
They chose to be ded in sundery wyse,
And deiedyn, as the story wele devyse.
And some were brend, and some were cut the hals,
And some dreynt, for they woldyn not be fals,

262 spryt. 276 ledde. 289 wole. 293 thy.

To serve me, and holdest it folye
To serve love, thou maist yt nat denye;
For in pleyne text, withouten nede of glose,
Thou hast translated the Romaunce of the Rose,
That is an heresye ayeins my lawe,
And makest wise folke fro me withdrawe.

And of Creseyde thou hast seyde as the lyste,
That maketh men to wommen lasse triste

That ben as trewe as ever was any steel.

326 *line defective in MS.* 329 *translated om.*

For alle kepid they here maydynhed,
Or ellis wedlok, or here wedewehed;
And this thing was nat kept for holynesse,
But al for verray vertu and clennesse,
And for men schulde sette on hem no lak;
And yit they were hethene, al the pak,
That were so sore adrad of alle schame.
These olde wemen kepte so here name,
That in this world, I trowe, men schal nat fynde
A man that coude be so trewe and kynde,
As was the leste woman in that tyde.
What seyth also the Epistelle of Ovyde
Of trewe wyvys and of here labour?
What Vincent, in his Estoryal Myrour?
Ek al the world of autourys maystow here,
Cristene and hethene, trete of swich matere,
It nedyth nat al day thus for to endite.
But yit I seye, what eylyth the to wryte
The draf of storyis, and forgete the corn?
Be Seynt Venus, of whom that I was born,
Althow thow reneyed hast my lay,
As othere olde folys, manye a day,

Thow schalt repente it, so that it schal be sene!"
Thanne spak Alceste, the worthyeste queene,
And seyde, "God, ryght of youre curteysye,
Ye motyn herkenyn if he can replye
Ageyns these poyntys that ye han to hym mevid.
A god ne schulde not thus been agrevyd,
But of his deite he schal be stable
And therto ryghtful and ek mercyable.
He schal nat ryghtfully his yre wreke
Or he have herd the tothyr partye speke.
Al ne is nat gospel that is to yow pleynyd,
The God of Love hereth manye a tale ifeynyd;
For in youre court is manye a losengeour,
And manye a queynte totulour acusour,
That tabourryn in youre eres manye a thyng
For hate, or for jelous ymagynyng,
And for to han with you sum dalyaunce.

308 *the* te; mayst tow. 314 reneyist. 318 worthyere. 322 *deite* dede. 328 losenger.

Of thyn answere avise the ryght weel;
For thogh that thou reneyed hast my lay,
As other wrecches han doon many a day,
By seynte Venus, that my moder ys,
If that thou lyve, thou shalt repenten this
So cruelly, that it shal wele be sene."
Thoo spake this lady, clothed al in grene,
And seyde, "God, ryght of youre curtesye,
Ye moten herken yf he can replye
Agayns al this, that ye have to him meved.
A god ne sholde nat be thus agreved,
But of hys deitee he shal be stable,
And therto gracious, and merciable.
And yf ye nere a god, that knowen alle,
Thanne myght yt be, as I yow tellen shalle,
This man to yow may falsly ben accused,
That as by right him oughte ben excused.
For in youre courte ys many a losengeour,
And many a queynte totelere accusour,
That tabouren in youre eres many a sown.
Ryght aftir hire ymagynacioun,
To have youre daliance, and for envie.

336 *that om.* 338 seint. 353 aqueynt. 354 swon.

Envye—I preie to god yeve hire myschaunce!—
Is lavender in the grete court alway,
For she ne partyth, neythir nyght ne day,
Out of the hous of Cesar, thus seyth Dante;
Whoso that goth, alwey sche mote not wante.
This man to yow may wrongly ben acused,
There as be ryght hym oughte ben excusid;
Or ellis, sere, for that this man is nyce,
He may translate a thyng in no malyce,
But for he usyth bokis for to make,
And takyth non hed of what matere he take;
Therfore he wrot the Rose and ek Crisseyde
Of innocence, and nyste what he seyde.
Or hym was bodyn make thilke tweye
Of sum persone, and durste it not withseye;
For he hath wrete manye a bok er this.
He ne hath not don so grevosly amys
To translate that olde clerkis wryte,
As thow that he of maleys wolde endyte
Despit of love, and hadde hymself iwrouht.
This schulde a ryghtwys lord han in his thought,
And not ben lyk tyrauntis of Lumbardye
That usyn wilfulhed and tyrannye;
For he that kyng or lord is naturel,
Hym oughte nat be tyraunt and crewel
As is a fermour, to don the harm he can;
He muste thynke, it is his lige man,
And that hym owith, o verry duetee,
Schewyn his peple pleyn benygnete,
And wel to heryn here excusacyouns,
And here compleyntys and petyciouns,
In duewe tyme whan they schal it profre;
This is the sentens of the philysophre:
A kyng to kepe hise lygis in justise,
Withouten doute, that is his offise,
And therto is a kyng ful depe isworn
Ful manye an hunderede wyntyr here beforn,
And for to kepe his lordys hir degre,
As it is ryght and skylful that they be
Enhaunsede and honoured, and most dere,
For they ben half goddys in this world here;

335 *she* he; nygh. 337 *not om.* 359 must. 367 which oughtyn. 372 *and om.*

Thise ben the causes, and I shal not lye;
Envie ys lavendere of the court alway,
For she ne parteth, neither nyght ne day,
Out of the house of Cesar, thus seith Dante;
Who so that gooth, algate she wol nat wante.

And eke perauntere for this man ys nyce,
He myghte doon yt, gessyng no malice;
But for he useth thynges for to make,
Hym rekketh noght of what matere he take;

Or him was boden maken thilke tweye
Of somme persone, and durste yt nat with-seye;
Or him repenteth outrely of this,
He ne hath nat doon so grevously amys
To translaten that olde clerkes writen,
As thogh that he of malice wolde enditen
Despite of love, and had him-selfe yt wroght.
This shoolde a ryghtwis lord have in his thoght,
And nat be lyke tirauntez of Lumbardye,
That han no reward but at tyrannye.
For he that kynge or lord ys naturel,
Hym oghte nat be tiraunt ne crewel
As is a fermour, to doon the harme he kan.
He moste thinke yt is his leege man,

And is his tresour, and his gold in cofre.
This is the sentence of the philosophre:
A kyng to kepe hise leeges in justice,
Withouten doute, that is his office;

Al wol he kepe hise lordes hire degree,
As it ys ryght and skilful that they bee
Enhaunced and honoured, and most dere,
For they ben half goddys in this world here,

363 myght. 364 *But om.* 366 *Or* Of. 371 *As* And. 376 ys in. 377 oght.

This schal he don, bothē to pore and ryche,
Al be that her estat be nat alyche,
And han of pore folk compassioun;
For lo, the gentyl kynde of the lyoun!
For whan a flye offendyth hym or bytith,
He with his tayl awey the flye smytyth
Al esyly; for, of his genterye,
Hym deynyth nat to wreke hym on a flye,
As doth a curre, or ellis anothir beste.
In noble corage oughte ben areste,
And weyen every thyng by equite,
And evere han reward to his owẹn degre.
For, sire, it is no maystrye for a lord
To dampne a man withoute answere or word;
And for a lord that is wol foul to use.
And if so be, he may hym nat ascuse,
But axith mercy with a sorweful herte,
And proferyth hym ryght in his bare scherte
To been ryght at youre owene jugement,
Than ought a God, by schort avisement,
Considere his owene honour and his trespace.
For sythe no cause of deth lyth in this cace,
Yow oughte to ben the lyghtere merciable.
Letith youre yre and beth sumwhat tretable;
The man hath servyd yow of his konnyng,
And fortheryd youre lawe with his makyng.
Whil he was yong he kepte youre estat;
I not where he be now a renagat,
But wel I wot, with that he can endyte,
He hath makid lewede folk to delyte
To servyn yow in preysynge of youre name.
He made the bok that highte the Hous of Fame,
And ek the Deth of Blaunche the duchesse,
And the Parlement of Foulis, as I gesse,
And al the love of Palamon and Arcite
Of Thebes, thow the storye is knowe lite;
And manye an ympne for your halydayis,
That hightyn baladis, roundelys, vyrelayes;
And for to speke of othyr besynesse,
He hath in prose translatid Boece,
And of the Wrechede Engendrynge of Mankynde,

374 *and om.* 384 euerych. 390 *But om.* 398 konnyg. 410 thour. 411 and vyrelayis.

Yit mote he doon bothe ryght to poore and ryche,
Al be that hire estaat be nat yliche,
And han of poore folke compassyoun.
For, loo, the gentil kynde of the lyon!
For whan a flye offendith him or biteth,
He with his tayle awey the flye smyteth
Al esely, for of hys gentrye
Hym deyneth not to wreke hym on a flye,
As dooth a curre, or elles another best.
In noble corage oughte ben arest,
And weyen every thing by equytee,
And ever have rewarde to his owen degree.
For, syr, yt is no maistrye for a lorde
To dampne a man without answere of worde,
And for a lorde that is ful foule to use.
And it so be he may hym nat excuse,
But asketh mercy with a dredeful herte,
And profereth him ryght in his bare sherte
To ben ryght at your owen jugement,
Than oght a God, by short avysement,
Consydre his owne honour and hys trespas.
For syth no cause of dethe lyeth in this caas,
Yow oghte to ben the lyghter merciable;
Leteth youre ire, and beth sumwhat tretable!
The man hath served yow of his kunnyng,
And furthred wel youre lawe in his makyng.

Al be hit that he kan nat wel endite,
Yet hath he made lewde folke delyte
To serve yow, in preysinge of your name.
He made the book that hight the Hous of Fame,
And eke the deeth of Blaunche the Duchesse,
And the Parlement of Foules, as I gesse,
And al the love of Palamon and Arcite
Of Thebes, thogh the storye ys knowen lyte;
And many an ympne for your halydayes,
That highten balades, roundels, virelayes.
And for to speke of other holynesse,
He hath in proce translated Boece,

393 fle. 397 ought. 399 *to* unto.

As man may in Pope Innocent ifynde;
And made the Lyf also of Seynt Cecile.
He made also, gon sithen a gret while,
Orygenes upon the Maudeleyne;
Hym oughte now to have the lesse peyne.
He hath mad manye a lay and manye a thyng;
Now as ye ben a god and ek a kyng,
I, youre Alceste, whilom Quene of Trace,
I axe yow this man ryght of youre grace,
That ye hym nevere hurte in al his lyve;
And she schal swere to yow, and that as blyve,
He schal no more agiltyn in this wyse;
But he schal makyn, as ye wele devyse,
Of wemen, trewe in lovynge al here lyve,
Wher-so ye wele, of maydyn or of wyve;
And fortheryn yow, as meche as he mysseyde
Or in the Rose or ellis in Crisseyde."
The God of Love answerede hire thus anon:
"Madame," quod he, "it is so longe agon
That I yow knew so charytable and trewe,
That nevere yit, sithe that the world was newe,
To me ne fond I never non bet than the;
That if that I wele save my degre,
I may ne wel not warne youre requeste.
Al lyth in yow, doth with hym what yow leste,
And al foryeve, withoute lengere space,
For who so yevyth a yifte, or doth a grace,
Do it be-tyme, his thank is wel the more.
And demyth ye what he shal don therfore.
Go, thanke now my lady here," quod he.
I ros, and doun I sette me on my kne,
And seyde thus: "Madame, the God above
Foryelde yow that ye the God of Love
Han makyd me his wrethe to foryeve;
And yeve me grace so longe for to leve
That I may knowe sothly what ye be,
That han me holpyn and put in swich degre.
But trewely I wende, as in this cas,
Naught have agilt, ne don to Love trespas.
For why, a trewe man withoute drede,
Hath nat to parte with a thevys dede,

417 sithen is. 419 ouughte. 423 rygh. 436 betere. 442 *the* te. 451 put me.

And maade the Lyfe also of Seynt Cecile.
He made also goon sithen a grete while,
Origenes upon the Maudeleyne;
Hym oughte now to have the lesse peyne.
He hath maade many a lay and many a thinge.
Now as ye be a God and eke a kynge,
I, your Alceste, whilom quene of Trace,
Y aske yow this man ryght of your grace,
That ye him never hurte in al his lyve.
And he shal sweren to yow, and that as blyve,
He shal never more agilten in this wyse;
But he shal maken, as ye wol devyse,
Of wommen trewe in lovyng al hire lyfe,
Wherso ye wol, of mayden or of wyfe,
And forthren yow as muche as he mysseyde
Or in the Rose, or elles in Creseyde."
The God of Love answerede hire anoon,
"Madame," quod he, "it is so long agoon
That I yow knewe so charitable and trewe,
That never yit, syn that the worlde was newe,
To me ne founde y better noon than yee.
If that I wolde save my degree,
I may ne wol nat werne your requeste,
Al lyeth in yow, dooth wyth hym as yow liste;
I al foryeve, withouten lenger space;
For who so yeveth a yifte or dooth a grace,
Do it by-tyme, his thank ys wel the more.
And demeth ye, what he shal doo therfore.
Goo thanke now my lady here," quod he.
I roos, and doune I sette me on my knee,
And seyde thus, "Madame, the God above
Foryelde yow, that ye the god of love
Han maked me his wrathe to foryive,
And gyve me grace so long for to lyve,
That I may knowe soothly what ye bee,
That han me holpe and put in this degree.
But trewely I wende, as in this cas,
Naught have agilt, ne doon to Love trespas.
For why, a trewe man, withouten drede,
Hath nat to parten with a theves dede;

427 *sithen* ys. 435 *as om.* 437 *he om.* 447 *I* ye. 457 *ye om.* 459 *gyve me om.* 461 me in. 462 trewly.

Ne a trewe lovere oughte me nat blame,
Thow that I speke a fals lovere sum schame;
They aughte rathere with me for to holde,
For that I of Criseyde wrot or tolde,
Or of the Rose, what so myn auctour mente,
Algate, God wot, it was myn entente
To forthere trouthe in love and it cheryse,
And to be war from falsenesse and from vice
By swich ensaumple, this was my menynge."
And sche answerde, "Lat be thyn arguynge,
For Love ne wele nat countyrpletyd be
In ryght ne wrong; and lerne this at me,
Thow hast thy grace, and holde the ryght therto.
Now wole I seyn, what penaunce thow schalt do
For thy trespace, and undyrstonde it here;
Thow schalt, whil that thow levyst yer be yere
The moste partye of thy lyve spende
In makynge of a gloryous legende
Of goode wemen, maydenys and wyves,
That were trewe in lovynge al here lyvys;
And telle of false men that hem betrayen
That al here lyf ne don nat but asayen
How manye wemen they may don a schame.
For in youre world that is now holdyn game!
And thow the lestyth nat a lovere be,
Spek wel of love, this penaunce yeve I the;
And to the God of Love I schal so preye
That he schal charge hise servauntys, by ony weye,
To fortheryn the, and wel thy labour quite.
Go now thy wey, thy penaunce is but lyte."

The God of Love gan smyle, and thanne he seyde,
"Wostow," quod he, "wher this be wif or mayde
Or queen or countesse, or of what degre
That hath so lytil penaunce yevyn the,
That hast deservyd sorere for to smerte?
But pete rennyth sone in gentil herte;
That mayst thow sen, sche kytheth what sche is."
And I answerde, "Nay, sere, so have I blys,
No more but that I se wel sche is good."

456 *oughte* may. 469 schat. 471 *that om.* 472 lyf.

Ne a trewe lover oghte me not to blame,
Thogh that I spake a fals lovere som shame.
They oghte rather with me for to holde
For that I of Creseyde wroot or tolde,
Or of the Rose, what so myn auctour mente.
Algate, God woot, yt was myn entente
To forthren trouthe in love, and yt cheryce,
And to ben war fro falsnesse and fro vice
By swiche ensample, this was my menynge."
And she answerde, "Lat be thyn arguynge,
For Love ne wol nat countrepleted be
In ryght ne wrong; and lerne that of me;
Thow hast thy grace, and holde the ryght therto.
Now wol I seyn what penance thou shalt do
For thy trespas, and understonde yt here,
Thow shalt, while that thou lyvest yere by yere,
The most partye of thy tyme spende
In makyng of a glorious legende
Of goode wymmen, maydenes and wyves,
That weren trew in lovyng al hire lyves,
And telle of false men that hem bytraien,
That al hir lyfe ne do nat but assayen
How many women they may doon a shame;
For in youre worlde that is now holde a game!
And thogh the lyke nat a lovere bee,
Speke wel of love; this penance yive I the.
And to the God of Love I shal so preye,
That he shal charge his servantez, by any weye,
To forthren thee, and wel thy labour quyte.
Goo now thy weye, this penaunce ys but lyte;
And whan this book ys maade, yive it the quene
On my byhalfe, at Eltham or at Sheene."
The God of Love gan smyle, and than he sayde,
"Wostow," quod he, "wher this be wyf or mayde,
Or queene or countesse, or of what degre
That hath so lytel penance yiven thee
That hast deserved sorere for to smerte?
But pite renneth soone in gentil herte;
That maistow seen, she kytheth what she ys."
And I answered, "Nay, sire, so have I blys,
Na moore, but that I see wel she is good."

466 oght. 480 *and om.* 484 good. 487 *line om.* 488 *they* that.
502-3 *MS. defective.*

"That is a trewe tale, by myn hod,"
Quod Love, "and that thow knowist wel, parde.
Yif it be so that thow avise the!
Hast thow nat in a bok, lyth in thy cheste,
The grete goodnesse of the queene Alceste,
That turnede was into a dayesye;
Sche that for hire husbonde ches to deye
And ek to gon to helle, rathere than he;
And Ercules rescued hire, parde,
And broughte hyre out of helle ageyn to blys?"
And I answerde agen, and seyde, "Yis,
Now knowe I hire, and is this goode Alceste,
The dayeseye, and myn owene hertes reste?
Now fele I wel the goodnesse of this wif,
That bothe aftyr hire deth and ek hire lyf
Hire grete bounte doubelyth hire renoun.
Wel hath sche quit me myn affeccioun
That I have to hire flour, the dayesye;
No wondyr is, thow Jove hire stellefye,
As tellyth Agaton, for hyre goodnesse!
Hire white coroun beryth of it witnesse;
For also manye vertuys hath sche
As smale flourys in hyre coroun be.
Of remembrauns of hire, and in honour,
Cibella made the dayesye and the flour
Icoroned al with whit, as men may se;
And Mars yaf to hire corone red, parde,
In stede of rubeis, set among the white."
Therwith this queene wex red for schame a lyte,
Whan sche was preysid so in hire presence.
Thanne seyde Love, "A ful gret neglygence
Was it to the, to write onstedefastnesse
Of women, sithe thow knowist here goodnesse
By pref, and ek by storyis here byforn.
Let be the chaf, and writ wel of the corn.
Why noldist thow han writyn of Alceste,
And latyn Criseide ben aslepe, and reste?
For of Alceste schulde thy wrytynge be,
Syn that thow wist that calandier is she

Of goodnesse, for sche taughte of fyn lovynge,
And namely, of wifhod the lyvynge,

496 Qod. 507 herte is. 513 stellesye. 520 ma. 531 rest.

"That is a trewe tale, by myn hood,"
Quod Love, "and that thou knowest wel, pardee,
If yt be so that thou avise the!
Hastow nat in a book, lyth in thy cheste,
The grete goodnesse of the quene Alceste,
That turned was into a daysye?
She that for hire housbonde chees to dye,
And eke to goon to helle, rather than he,
And Ercules rescowed hire, parde,
And broght hir out of helle agayne to blys?"
And I answerd ageyn, and sayde, "Yis,
Now knowe I hire; and is this good Alceste,
The daysie, and myn owene hertes reste?
Now fele I weel the goodnesse of this wyf;
That both aftir hir deth and in hir lyf
Hir grete bounte doubleth hire renoun.
Wel hath she quyt me myn affeccioun
That I have to hire flour, the daysye!
No wonder ys thogh Jove hire stellyfye,
As telleth Agaton, for hire goodenesse.
Hire white corowne berith of hyt witnesse;
For also many vertues hadde shee
As smale florouns in hire corowne bee.
In remembraunce of hire and in honoure
Cibella maade the daysye and the floure
Ycrowned al with white, as men may see;
And Mars yaf to hire corowne reede, pardee,
In stede of rubyes, sette among the white."
Therwith this queene wex reed for shame a lyte,
Whan she was preysed so in hire presence.
Thanne seyde Love, "A ful grete necligence
Was yt to the, that ylke tyme thou made.

'*Hyd, Absolon thy tresses*' in balade,

That thou forgate hire in thi songe to sette,

Syn that thou art so gretly in hire dette,
And wost so wel that kalender ys shee
To any woman that wol lover bee;
For she taught al the crafte of fyne lovyng,
And namely of wyfhode the lyvyng,

508 *that om.* 511 gret. 542 *so om.*

And alle the boundys that sche aughte kepe.
Thy lityl wit was thilke tyme aslepe.
But now I charge the, upon thy lyf,
That in thy legende thow make of this wif,
Whan thow hast othere smale mad byfore;
And fare now wel, I charge the no more.

At Cliopatre I wele that thow begynne,
And so forth; and my love so shaltow wynne."

And with that word of slep I gan a-wake,
And ryght thus on my Legende gan I make.

Explicit prohemium.

543 shalt tow.

And al the boundes that she oght kepe,
Thy litel witte was thilke tyme a-slepe;
But now I charge the, upon thy lyfe
That in thy legende thou make of thys wyfe
Whan thou hast other smale ymaade before.
And fare now wel, I charge the namore.
But er I goo, thus muche I wol the telle;
Ne shal no trewe lover come in helle.
Thise other ladies sittynge here arowe
Ben in thy balade, yf thou kanst hem knowe;
And in thy bookes alle thou shalt hem fynde.
Have hem in thy legende now al in mynde;
I mene of hem that ben in thy knowyng,
For here ben twenty thousande moo sittyng
Thanne thou knowest, that ben good wommen alle,
And trewe of love for oght that may byfalle.
Make the metres of hem as the lest,
I mot goon home, the sonne draweth west,
To paradys with al thise companye,
And serve alwey the fresshe daysye!
At Cleopatre I wole that thou begynne,
And so forthe, and my love so shal thou wynne.
For lat see now, what man that lover be
Wol doon so stronge a peyne for love as she?
I wot wel that thou maist nat al yt ryme,
That swiche lovers diden in hire tyme;
It were to long to reden and to here.
Sufficeth me thou make in this manere,
That thou reherce of al hir lyfe the grete,
After thise olde auctours lysten for to trete;
For whoso shal so many a storye telle,
Sey shortly, or he shal to longe dwelle."
And with that worde my bokes gan I take,
And ryght thus on my Legende gan I make.

555 *thy* my. 560 *that ben om.* 561 *may* my. 565 fressh.
571 swich; dide. 573 suffich.

THE LEGEND OF CLEOPATRA

Incipit legenda Cleopatrie regine.

Afftyr the deth of Tholome the kyng,
That al Egipt hadde in his governyng,
Regnede his queene Cleopataras;
Tyl on a tyme befel there swich a cas,
That out of Rome was sent a senatour,
For to conqueryn regnys and honour
Unto the Toun of Rome as was usaunce,
To han the world unto hyre obeysaunce;
And soth to seyne, Antonius was his name.
So fil it, as fortune hym aughte a schame
Whan he was fallyn in prosperite,
Rebel unto the Toun of Rome is he,
And ovyral this, the sustyr of Cesar
He lafte hire falsly, or that sche was war,
And wolde algates han a nothir wif,
For which he tok with Rome and Cesar stryf.
Natheles, for sothe, this ilke senatour
Was a ful worthy gentyl werriour,
And of his deth it was ful gret damage.
But love hadde brought this man in swich a rage,
And hym so narwe boundyn in his las,
Al for the love of Cleopataras,
That al the world he sette at no value.
Hym thoughte there nas to hym nothyng so dewe
As Cleopatras for to love and serve.
Hym roughte nat in armys for to sterve
In the diffens of hyre, and of hire ryght.
This noble queene ek lovede so this knyght,
Thourgh his desert, and for his chyvalrye,
As certeynly, but if that bokys lye,

582 queen. 586 usage. 593 *falsly* falle. 594 algate. 603 thoute. 608 thour.

He was of persone and of gentillesse,
And of discrecioun and of hardynesse,
Worthi to ony wyght that lyvyn may;
And sche was fayr as is the rose in May.
And for to make shortly is the beste;
Sche wax his wif, and hadde hym as hire leste.
The weddynge and the feste to devyse,
To me that have ytake swich empryse
Of so manye a story for to make,
It were to longe, lest that I schulde slake
Of thyng that beryth more effect and charge.
For men may overlade a schip or barge
And forthy, to thefeect thanne wele I skyppe,
And al the remenaunt I wele lete slippe.
Octovyan, that wod was of this dede,
Schop hym an ost on Antonye to lede,
Al utyrly for his destruccioun,
With stoute Romeynys, crewel as lyoun;
To schepe they wente, and thus I lat hem sayle.
Antonius was war, and wele nat fayle
To metyn with these Romeynys, if he may;
Tok eek his red, and bothe, upon a day,
Hys wif and he, and al his ost forth wente,
To shepe anon, no lengere they ne stente;
And in the se it happede hem to mete—
Up goth the trompe! and for to schoute and schete,
And peynede hem to sette on with the sunne;
With grysely soun out goth the grete gonne,
And heterly they hurtelyn al atonys.
From the top doun comyth the grete stonys;
In goth the grapenel so ful of crokis,
Among the ropis rennyth the scherynge hokys;
In with the polax presith he and he;
Byhyndyn the mast begynnyth he to fle;
And out a-geyn and dryvyth hym overborde;

632 wentyn. 642 *he* & sche.

He styngith hym upon his sperys orde;
He rent the seyl with hokys lyk a sithe;
He bryngith the cuppe and biddyth hem to be blythe;
He pouryth pesyn up on the hachis sledere;
With pottis ful of lym they gon togedere.
And thus the longe day togedere they spende,
Tyl at the laste, as every thyng hath ende,
Antonye is schent, and put hym to the flyght;
And al his folk to-go, that best go myght.
Fleth ek the queen, with al hire porpere sayl,
For strokys whiche that wente as thikke as hayl;
No wondyr was sche myghte it nat endure.
And whan that Antonye saw that aventure,
"Allas," quod he, "the day that I was born!
My worshepe in this day thus have I lorn!"
And for dispeyr out of his wit he sterte,
And rof hymself anon thourgh out the herte,
Or that he ferthere wente out of the place.
His wif, that coude of Cesar have no grace,
To Egipt is fled, for dred and for destresse.
But herkenyth, ye that spekyn of kyndenesse,
Ye men that falsely swere manye an oth,
That ye wele deye, if that youre love be wroth,
Here may ye sen of wemen which a trouthe!
This woful Cleopatre hath mad swich routhe
That ther is tunge non that may it telle;
But on the morwe sche wolde no lengere dwelle,
But made hire subtyl werkemen make a schryne
Of alle the rubyis and the stonys fyne
In al Egypte, that sche coude espie;
And putte ful the schryne of spicerye,
And let the cors enbaumme, and forth sche fette
This dede cors, and in the schryne it schette,
And next the schryne a pet thanne doth sche grave,
And alle the serpentys that sche myghte have,

651 hat. 661 thour. 664 is sche. 674 Egypt.

Sche putte hem in that grave; and thus sche seyde:
"Now, love, to whom myn sorweful herte obeyede
So ferforthly, that from that blisful our
That I yow swor to ben al frely your,
I mene yow, Antonius, my knyght!
That nevere wakynge in the day or nyght
Ye nere out of myn hertis remembraunce,
For wel or wo, for carole or for daunce;
And in myn self this covenaunt made I tho,
For ryght swich as ye feldyn, wel or wo,
As fer forth as it in my power lay
Unreprovable onto my wyfhod ay,
The same wolde I fele, lyf or deth,
And thilke covenant, whil me lastith breth,
I wele fulfille, and that schal ben wel sene;
Was nevere onto hire love a trewere quene."
And with that word, nakyd, with ful good herte,
Among the serpentis in the pit sche styrte,
And there sche ches to havyn hire buryinge.
Anon the nadderys gonne hire for to stynge,
And sche hire deth receyvyth with good cheere,
For love of Antonye that was hire so dere.
And this is storyal soth, it is no fable,
Now, or I fynde a man thus trewe and stable,
And wele for love his deth so frely take,
I preye God let oure hedys nevere ake. Amen.

Explicit Cliopatra.[1]

685 nygh. 689 rygh. 693 comenant.

[1]The Legends follow of Thisbe, Dido, Hypsipyle and Medea, Ariadne, Philomela, Phyllis, and Hypermnestra.

A COMPLEINT TO HIS LADY

(I. *Seven-line Stanzas,* 1)

The longe nyghtis whan every creature
  Shuld have theyr rest in somwhat, as be kynde,
Or ellis ne may theyr lif nought longe endure,
  It fallith most into my wooful mynde
  How I so fer have brought my self behynde,
    That, sauf the deth, ther may nothyng me lisse,
    So disespaired I am from alle blisse.

(I. 2)

This same thought me lastith til the morow,
  And from the morow furth til it be eve;
There nedith me no care for to borow,
  For both I have gode leyser and goode leve.
  Ther is no wight that wil my wo bireve
    To wepe inough, and wailen al my fill;
    The sore spark of peyne now doth me spill.

(3) [*Terza Rima,* 1]

The sore spark of peyne now doth me spill,
  This love that hath me set in suche a place
That my desire never wil fulfill,
  For neither pite, mercy, neyther grace
Can I nat fynde; and yit my sorowful hert
  For to be dede, I can it nat arace.
The more I love, the more she doth me smert,
  Thurgh whiche I se without remedye
That from the dethe I may in no wise astert.

2 *as om.* 7 dispaired; al. 17 neuer wil. 22 *I se om.*

(4) [II. *Terza Rima*, 2]

Now sothly what she hight, I wil reherce:
Hir name is Bounte set in Wommanhede,
Sadnesse in Yowth, and Beaute Prideles,
And Plesaunce under Governaunce and Drede.
Hir surname is eke Faire Rowtheles
The Wise iknyt unto Goode Aventure,
That, for I love hir, she sleeth me giltles.
Hir love I best, and shal, while I may dure,
Better than my self, an hundred thousand dele,
Than al this worldis riches or creature.
Now hath nat Love me bestowed wele
To love, there I never shal have part?
Elas, right thus is turned me the whele!
Thus am I slayn with Loves fury dart;
I can but love hir best, my swete foo,
Love hath me taught nomore of his art
But serve alwey, and stynte for no woo.

(5) [III. *Ten-line Stanzas*, 1]

In my trewe careful hert there is
So moche woo, and eek so litel blisse,
That woo is me that ever I was bore.
For alle thyng whiche I desire, I mysse,
And al that ever I wold nat, Iwisse,
That fynd I redy to me evermore;
And of al this I not to whom me pleyne
For she that myghte me out of this bryng
Ne recchith nought, whether I wepe or synge,
So litel rowth hath she upon my peyne.

(6) (III. 2)

Elas, whan slepyng tyme is, lo, than I wake;
Whan I shuld daunce, for feere, lo, than I qwake,

40 stynt. 42 *eek om.* 44 al. 48 myght.

This hevy liff I leede, loo, for yowre sake,
Though ye therof in no wise heede take,
Myn hertis lady, and hole my lives qwene
  For trewly durst I sey, and that I fele,
  Me semeth that your sweete hert of steele
Is whetted now ayeines me to kene.

(7) (III. 3)

My dere hert, and best be-loved foo,
Why likith yow to do me al this woo?
  What have I don that grevith yow, or saide,
But for I serve and love yow, and no mo,
And while I live I wil ever do soo?
  And therfor, sweete, me beth nat evil apayed;
For so goode and so faire as ye be,
  It were right grete wonder but ye had
  Of al servauntis, both of goode and bad,
And lest worthy of al hem, I am he.

(8) (III. 4)

But nevertheles, my righte lady swete,
Though that I be unkonnyng and unmeete
  To serve as I best kowde ay yowre hienesse,
Yit is ther non fayner, that wolde I heete,
Than I to do youre ease, or ellis beete
  What so I wist, that were to your distresse.
And had I myght as goode as I have wil,
  Than shuld ye feele where it were so, or non;
  For in this world than livyng is ther non,
That fayner wolde youre hertis wil fulfil.

(9) (III. 5)

For both I love, and eke drede yow so sore,
And algatis mote, and have yow don ful yoore,

53, 56 missing. 58 ayens. 69 right. 71 *best om.* 74 *distresse* hyenesse.

That bettir loved is non, ne never shal.
And yit I wold besechen you of nomore
But levith wele, and beth nat wroth therfore,
And lete me serve yow forth, lo, this is al.
For I am nat so hardy, ne so woode,
For to desire that ye shuld love me,
For wele I wote, elas, that wil nat be,
I am so litel worthy, and ye so goode.

(10) (III. 6)

For ye be oon the worthyest on lyve,
And I the most unlikly for to thryve.
Yit, for al this, witeth ye right wele,
That ye ne shul me from youre service dryve,
That I ne wil ay with al my wittes fyve,
Serve yow triewly what wo so that I fele,
For I am sette on yow in suche manere,
That though ye never wil upon me rewe,
I must yow love, and bien ever als triew,
As any man can, or may, on live here.

(11) (III. 7)

But the more that I love yow, goodly free,
The lasse fynd I that ye loven me;
Elas, whan shal that harde witte amend?
Where is now al your wommanly pite,
Youre gentilnesse, and your debonarite?
Wil ye nothyng therof upon me spende?
And so hoole, swete, as I am yowres al,
And so grete wil as I have yow to serve,
Now certis, and ye lete me thus sterve,
Yet have ye wonne theron but a smal.

83 lovith. 98 *here om.* 101 hard. 108 *ye om.*

(12) (III. 8)

For, at my knowyng, I do nat why;
And this I wil beseche yow hertily,
  That there ever ye finde, whiles ye live,
A triewer servaunt to yow than am I,
Loveth [hym] thanne, and sle me hardily,
  And [I] my deth to yow wil al forgyve.
And if ye fynde no trewer [goodly free]
  Wil ye suffre than that I thus spil,
  And for no maner gilt but my goode wil?
Als goode were thanne untriewe as triewe to be.

(13) (*Unique final stanza,* III. 9)

But I, my lif and deth, to yow obey,
And with right buxum hert holy I prey,
  As youre most plesure is, so doth by me;
For wele lever is me liken yow and dye,
Than for to any thyng or thynk or say
  That yow myght offenden, in any tyme,
And therfor, swete, rewe on my peynes smert,
  And of your grace grauntith me som drope,
  For ellis may me last no blisse ne hope,
Ne dwelle withyn my trouble careful hert.

Explicit Pyte.

115 trewer so verily. 118 *to be* triewly. 121 *is om.*

ANELYDA AND ARCYTE

Lo my lordis and ladyes Here folowyng may ye see the maner of the lovyng bytwene Arcite of Thebes and Anelida the faire Quene of Hermony which with his feyned chere doublenesse and flateryng disceiued her withouten cause she beyng than oon of the trewest gentilwomen that bere lyf compleyneth her I beseche you.

Thow fierse god of armes, Mars the rede,
That in the frosty contrey called Trace,
Within thi gresly temple ful of drede
Honured art, as patroun of that place,
With thi Bellona, Pallas, ful of grace,
Be present, and my song contynue and guy;
At my begynnyng thus to the I cry.

For hit ful depe is sonken in my mynd
With pitous herte in Englissh for to endite
This olde story in Latyne which I fynde,
Of quene Anelyda and fals Arcite,
That eelde, which that all can frete and bite,
As hit hath froten many a noble story,
Hath negh devoured oute of my memory.

Be favourable eke, thow Polymea,
On Parnaso that with thi sustren glade
By Ellicon, noght fer frome Cirea,
Syngest with voice memorial in the shade,
Undir the laurier which that may not fade;
And do that I my ship to haven wynne.
First folowe I Stace, and aftir that Corynne.

Whan Theseus, with werres longe and grete,
The aspre folke of Cithe had overcome,
With laurer corouned, in his chare gold-bete,

1 fiers. 17 negh.

Home to his cuntre-houses is ecome,
For which the people, blisfull hole and some,
So crydon that unto the sterres it wente,
And him to honuren, diden all her entente.

Beforne this duk, in signe of hie victorye,
The trumpes came, and in his baner large
The ymage of Mars; and tokenyng of his glorie,
Men mighten seen of tresoure many a charge,
Many bright helme, and many spere and targe,
Many a fressh knyght, and blisful route,
On hors and fote, in all the felde aboute.

Ypolita his wyf, the hardy quene
Of Cithea, that he conquered had,
With Emelye, her yonge sustir shene,
Faire in a chaier of gold he with him ladde,
That all the ground aboute the chare she sprad
With brightnesse of the beaute in her face,
Fulfilled of largesse and of alle grace.

With his tryumphe, of lawrier corouned thus,
In all the floure of Fortunes yevyng
Lete I this noble prince, this Theseus,
Towardes Attenes in his wey ridyng;
And fonde I woll in shortly for to bryng
The slye wey of that I gan to write,
Of quene Anelida and fals Arcyte.

Mars, which that thurgh his furious cours of yre,
The olde wrath of Juno to fulfille,
Hath sette the peoplis hertis both on fyre
Of Thebes and Grece, yche othir for to kylle,
With blody speris ne rested never stille
But throng, now here, now there, amongis hem both,
Tyll everich othir slough, so were thei wroth.

37 conquerd. 38 yong. 41 With the. 48 *slye* sleght. 49 Of the. 50 *that om.*

For whan Amphyorax and Tydius,
Ypomedon, Parthonopee also
Weren dede, and sleyn proude Campaneus,
And whan the wrechid Thebans, bretheren two,
Were slayne; and kyng Adrastus home ego,
So desolate stode Thebes and so bare,
That no wight coude remedy of his fare.

And whan that olde Creon gan espie
How that the blode riall was brought adoun,
He held that cite by his thyrannye,
And did the gentils of that regyoune
To ben his frend, and wonen in the toune;
So what for love of him, and what for awe,
The noble folke were to the toune edrawe.

Amonges all thies, Anelida, the quene
Of Ermony was in that toune duellyng,
That feirer was than is the sonne shene
Thurghoute the world so gan her name spryng
That her to seen had every wight likyng.
For, as of trouth, is there non her liche
Of all the wymen in this worlde riche.

Yong was this quene, of twenty yere of elde,
Of myddell stature, and of suche fairenesse
That Nature had grete joy her to beholde;
And for to speken of her stedfastnes,
She passed hath Penelope and Lucresse,
And shortly if she shall be comprehendid,
In her ne myghte nothing be amendid.

This Theban knyght eke, Arcite soth to seyn,
Was yong, and therewithall a lusty knyght,
But he was double in love, and nothing pleyne,

57 Tedius. 63 coude no. 65 edoun. 66 heled. 68 wonnen. 78 *of om.*
84 myght. 85 *Arcite om.*; the soth.

And subtill in that crafte over any wight,
And with his connyng wan that lady bright.
So ferforth, loo, he gan her trouth ensure,
That she him trustith above eche creature.

What shuld I seyn? she lovid Arcyte so,
That whan that he was absent any throwe,
Anon her thought hir herte brast on two,
For in her sight to her he bare him lowe,
So that she wende have all his hert eknowe,
But he was fals, hit nas but feyned chere,
All nedith not to men suche crafte to lere.

But natheles, ful mychell besynesse
Had he, or that he myght his lady wynne;
And swore he wolde deye for distresse,
Or from his witte he seyde he wolde twynne.
Alas, the while! for hit was routh and synne,
That she upon his sorowis wolde rewe.
But nothing thenkith the fals as doth the trewe.

Hir fredome fonde Arcyte in suche maner
That all was his that she hath, moche or lyte.
Ne to no creature made she chere,
Forther than that hit liked to Arcyte;
Ther nas no lacke with wiche he myght her wite,
Sheo was so ferforthe gyven him to plese,
That all that liked him, hit did her ese.

There nas to hir no maner lettre sent
That towchid love, from anye maner wyght
That she ne shewid it him or it was brent,
So pleyne she was, and did hir fulle might
That she nil hyden nothing frome hir knyght,
Lest he of eny untrouthe hir upbreyde,
Withouten bode his heste sheo obeyde.

89 *wan* what. 94 hert. 101 dey. 102 *he seyde om.* 104 wolden. 109 *to om.* 116 ful. 118 upbroyde. 119 cleyde (?).

And eke he made him jalowse over hir,
That what that any man had to hir seyde,
Anoon he wolde preyen her to swere
What was that worde, or maken him yvel apayde,
Thanne wende sheo oute of her wyt have brayed,
But all this nas but slight and flaterie,
Withouten love, of feyned jalowsye.

And al this toke sheo so debonayrely,
That al his wille, hir thought hit skilful thing;
And ever the lenger sheo lovid him tendrely,
And did him honour, as he were a kynge.
Hir hart was to him weddid with a ringe;
So ferforthe upon trowthe is hir entente
That where he goothe hir herte with him wente.

When sheo shall ete, on him is al hir thought,
That wele unnethe of mete tooke she keepe;
And what that sheo was to hir reste ebrought,
On him sheo thought alwey till that sheo slepe;
Whan he was absent, prevely sheo weepe.
Thus lyvethe fayere Anelyda the queene
For fals Arcyte, that did hir al this tene.

This fals Arcite, of his nuwefangulnesse,
For sheo to him so lovely was and trewe,
Tooke lasse deyntee of hir stedfastnesse,
And sawe anothere ladye, proude and nuwe,
And ryght anoon he cladde him in her huwe,
Woot I nowght whethir in white, rede, or grene,
And falsed fayr Anelide the qwene.

But natheles, gret wondre was it noone
Thawgh he were fals, for it is kynde of mane,
Sithe Lamek was, that is so longe agoone,

128 *hit* hir. 130 *And* An. 131 weddi. 133 his hert. 137 *that om.* 140 *al this* that. 147 falshed that. 150 lanek.

To been in love als fals as ever he cane;
He was the firste fadre that begane
To loven too, and liven in bygamye;
And he founde tentis firste, but yf men lye.

This fals Arcyte, sumwhat moste he feyne,
Whane he was fals, to cover his traitourye,
Right as an hors that can boothe byte and pleyne,
For he bare hir on honde of trecherye,
And swore he coude hir dowbilnesse espie,
And all was falsnesse, that sheo to him mente;
Thus swore this theoff, and forthe his weye he wente.

Ellas, what herte myght enduren it,
For routhe and woo hir sorow for to tell,
Or what man hath the connyng or the witte,
Or what man myght within the chambre dwelle,
Yf I to him rehersin shoulde the helle,
Which sufferith faire Anelyda the Quene
For fals Arcyte, that did her all this teene?

Sheo weopethe, waylethe, swoonethe pytously,
To grounde sheo fallethe, dede as any stoone,
Al craumpisshed hir lymmes crockedly.
Sheo spekithe as hir witte were all agoone,
Other coloure thanne asshen hath sheo noone,
Noon othir worde spekithe sheo, muche or lyte,
But "mercy, cruell herte myn, Arcyte!"

And thus endurith, til sheo was soo mate
That sheo nathe foot on whiche sheo may sustene,
But forthe langwissing ever in this estate,
On which Arcyte hath rowthe noon ne teene;
His herte was ellis where, nuwe and grene,
That on hir woo nought deynid him to thinke,
Him reccheth nought whether sheo fleete or synke.

152 that euer. 156 thratourye. 162 hart; endure. 174 luytle. 175 harte. 177 *foot om.* 178 *ever om.* 182 swynke.

His nuwe ladye holdithe him so narowe
Up by the brydell, at the staves ende,
That every worde he drad hit as an arowe;
Hir daunger made him boothe bowe and beende,
And as hir lyste, made him tourne and wende;
For sheo ne graunted him in hir lyvynge
No grace, whi that he hathe luste to synge;

But drofe him forthe, unnethe list hir knowe
That he was sarvant unto hir ladishippe,
But leste that he were proude, sheo held him lowe;
Thus servethe he, withouten fee or shipe,
Sheo sent him nowe to lande and nowe to shipe;
And for sheo gave him daungere al his fille
Therefore sheo had him at hir owne wille.

Ensaumple of this, yee thrifty women all,
Taketh here Anelida and fals Arcyte;
That for hir list him dere herte calle,
And was soo meke, therefore he lovd hir luyte;
The kynde of mannes herte is to delighte
In thing that straunge is, alsoo God me save!
For what he may not gete, that wolde he have.

Nowe tourne we to Anelyda ageyne,
Which peynithe day by day in languisshing;
But whane sheo sawe that hir gate no gayne,
Uppon a day full soroufull wepynge,
Sheo caste hir for to make a compleyning,
And of hir owne honde sheo gane hit wryte,
And sent hit to hir Theban knyght, Arcyte.

The compleynte of Anelida the Quene of Hermonye upon Arcyte borne of the blode riall of Thebes for his Doublenesse.

So thirllethe with the poynt of rememberaunce
The swerde of sorowe, whette with fals plesaunce,

185 *hit om.* 189 *that om.;* noo luste. 193 mete or shepe. 198 *here* of; *fals om.* 199 *That* And. 201 delight. 209 wreyte. 210 dann Arcyte.

Myn herte, bare of blisse and blak of huwe,
That turnid is in quakynge all my daunce,
My suretee in awhaaped countenaunce,
Sithe it avaylithe nowght for to be trewe;
For whoso trewest is, it shall hir rewe,
That servithe love and dothe hir observaunce
Alday till oon, and chaungethe for no newe.

I wot myselfe als welle als any wight,
For I lovid oon with all myn herte and might
More than myselfe, an hunderithe thousand sithe,
And callid him myn hertes lyff, my knight,
And was al his als fer as it was right;
When he was glad thane was I evere blythe,
And his disese was to me dethe als swythe;
And he ageyne his trouthe me had plight
For evermore, his ladye me to kythe.

Nowe is he fals, ellas! and causelesse,
And of my woo he is so rewthelesse,
That with oon worde him liste not oonys deyne
To brynge ageyne my sorowfull hert in pese,
For he is kaute up in another lese;
Right as him liste, he laughethe at my peyne,
And I ne can myne herte nought restreyne
For to love him, alweye never the lesse;
And of all this I note to whome me pleyne.

And shall I pleyne, ellas, that harde stounde!—
Unto my foo that gave myn herte a wounde,
And yette desirithe that myne harome be more?
Nay, certes, for ther shall I never founde;
Noon othir helpethe my soores for to sounde,
My destenye hathe shapen it full yore.

213 hart; hues. 219 *and om.* 225 klythe. 226 For his desire.
227 trought hathe me. 233 anether. 241 for certes ther; be founde.

I wolle noon other medecyne ne lore,
I wolle ben ay there I was oones bounde;
That I have seyde, beo seyde for evermore.

Ellas, wher is becomen your gentilnesse,
Youre wordes full of plesaunce and humblesse,
Youre observaunces, and so lowe manere,
Youre awaytinges and youre besynesse
Uppon me, that ye callid your mastresse,
Youre soverayne ladye of this worlde here?
Ellas, and is there neyther worde ne cheere
Yee vouchensaff uppon myn hevinesse?
Ellas, youre love, I bie it all to dere!

Nowe certes, swete, thaughe that yee
Thus causelesse the cause be
Of my dedely adversitee,
Your manly raysoun aught it to respite
To slee your frende, and namlie me,
That never yitte in noo degree
Offendid yowe, als wissely he
That al wot, oute of woo my sowle quite!
But for I was so pleyne, Arcyte,
In all my werkes, much and lyte,
And so besye yowe to delyte—
Myn honour sauf—meke and kynde and free,
Therfore ye putte on me this wyte,
And als ye recche not a myte,
Thaughe that the swerde of sorowe byte
My woofull herte, thorowe your creweltee.

My swete foo, whye doo yee soo? for shame!
And thenken yee, that fertherid be your name
To love a newe, and be untrewe? nay!
And putte yowe in sclaundre nowe and blame

246 syde (2). 253 *Ellas om.*; there nowe. 259 for to. 269 myght. 271 harte. 272 *foo* for.

For to do me adversite and grame,
That love yowe moste, God, well thou woste, alwaye?
Yitt come agayne, and yit be playne some daye,
And than shall this that nowe is mis be game,
And al forgyve, while that here live I maye.

Loo, herte myne! al this is for to seyne,
As whethir shall I pray or elles pleyne?
Which is the wey to do yowe to be trewe?
For outher mote I have yow in my cheyne,
Or withe the dethe yee mutte departe us tweyne,
Ther lithe noon othir meene weyes nuwe;
For God so wissly of my soule ruwe,
As verraylye yee slee me with the peyne,
That may yee see unfeynid on myn huwe.

For thus ferforth have I my deth ysoghte,
Myselfe I morder with my pryve thoghte,
For sorou and routh of youre unkyndenes;
I wepe, I wake, I faste, all helpeth noghte;
I weyve joy that is to speke of oghte;
I voyde companye, I flee gladdenes,
Who may avaunte her bet of hevynes
Then I? and to this plite have ye me broghte,
Withoute gilte, me nedyth no witnes.

And shulde I preye and weyve womanhode?
Nay rathere dye, than do soo creuell dede,
And axse mercy causeles, what nede?
And yf I pleyne what life that I lede,
Thane wol yee laughe, I knowe it oute of drede.
And yf that I to yowe myne othes beede
For myn excuse, a scorne shall be my mede;
Youre chere flourethe but it wolle not sede,
Full longe a-gon I ought to have taken hede.

280 forgyven. 282 *As* And. 285 twene. 290 soght. This stanza from MS. Tanner 346. 293 *wake* wele. 294 *weyve* voyde. 296 avaunce. 299 *weyve* venyme. 300 *than* that.

For thaughe I hade yowe nuwe to morowe agayne
I myght als weele kepe Averyll from rayne
As holde yow trewe, to make yowe stedfaste.
Almyghti God, of trowthe soverayne,
Where is the trowthe of man, whoo hathe it slayne?
Sheo that hem trustithe shall hem fynde als faste,
As in a tempeste is the roton maste.
Is that a tame beste that is ay fayne
To fleen aweye, when he is leeste agaste?

But mercy, swete, yf I myssaye,
Have I ought saide oute of the waye?
I not; my wytte is halffe awaye,
I fare as dothe the songe of Chaunte-pleure;
For nowe I pleyne, and now I playe,
I am so mased that I deye.
Arcyte hathe borne aweye the keye
Of all my worlde, and my goode aventure.
For in this worlde nys creature
Wakynge in moore discomfiture
Thane I, ne more sorowe endure;
And yf I slepe a furlonge wey or tweye,
Than thinkithe me that youre figure
Before me stante cloothed in asure,
To profren efte, and nuwe ensure
For to be trewe, and love me til I deye.

The longe nyght this wonder sight I drye,
And on the day for thilke afraye I dye,
And of al this right nought, ewysse, yee rechche.
Ne never mo myne eyen two beo drye,
And to youre routh and to your trouthe I crye
But welawaye! to fer ben thei to fecche;
Thus holdithe me my destenye a wrechche.

310 *to* and; yowe hoole. 316 *leeste* lefte. 332 dye. 337 rought.

But me to rede oute of this drede or gye
Ne may my witte, so weyke is it, nought strecche.

Thanne eonde I thus, sithe I may do namore,
And yeve it up for now and evir-more;
For shall I never efte put in balaunse
My sikurnesse, or leorne of love the lore.
But as the swane, I have harde sey full yore,
Ageynist his dethe shall syngen his penaunse,
So sey I here my destenye or chaunce,
How that Arcyte Anelyda so sore
Hathe thrilled with the poynte of rememberaunce.

When that Annelida, this wofull quene,
Hath of her hande writen in this wise,
With face dede, betwixe pale and grene,
She felle a-swow, and sith she gan to rise,
And unto Mars avowyth sacrifice,
Withinne the temple, with a sorofull chere,
That shapyn was, as ye shall aftyr here.

340 *gye* crye. 342 eondid. 351 This stanza from Tanner MS.

[*Unfinished.*]

THE FORMER AGE

(De Consolatione of Boethius, Philosophiæ.)

Chawcer vp-on this fyfte metur of the second book.

A blysful lyf, a paysyble and a swete
Ledden the peples in the former age;
They helde hem paied of fructes that they ete
Whiche that the feldes yave hem by usage.
They ne were nat forpampred with owtrage;
Onknowyn was the querne and ek the melle,
They êten mast, hawes, and swych pownage,
And dronken water of the colde welle.

Yit nas the grownd nat wownded with the plowh,
But corn up sprong, unsowe of mannes hond,
The which they gnodded, and eete nat half inowh;
No man yit knewe the forwes of his lond,
No man the fyr owt of the flynt yit fonde;
Unkorven and ungrobbed lay the vyne;
No man yit in the morter spices grond,
To clarre, ne to sawse of galentyne.

No madyr, welde, or wod no litestere
Ne knewh, the fles was of his former hewe;
No flessh ne wyste offence of egge or spere;
No coyn ne knewh man, which is fals or trewe;
No ship yit karf the wawes grene and blewe;
No marchaunt yit ne fette owtlandissh ware;
No trompes for the werres folk ne knewe,
Ne towres heye, and walles rownde or square.

What sholde it han avayled to werreye?
Ther lay no profyt, ther was no rychesse;
But corsed was the tyme, I dar wel seye,

2 poeples. 3 of the. 6 quyerne. 18 *his* is. 23 batails trompes.

That men fyrst dede hir swety bysynesse
To grobbe up metal, lurkynge in dirkenesse,
And in the ryverys fyrst gemmys sowhte.
Allas, than sprong up al the cursydnesse
Of coveytyse, that fyrst owr sorwe browhte!

Thyse tyrauntes put hem gladly nat in pres
No wyldnesse, ne no busshes, for to wynne
Ther poverte is, as seith Diogenes,
Ther as vitayle is ek so skars and thinne
That nat but mast or apples is therinne;
But ther as bagges ben and fat vitaile,
Ther wol they gon, and spare for no synne,
With al hir ost the cyte forto asayle.

Yit was no paleis chaumbres, ne non halles,
In kaves and in wodes softe and swete
Sleptin this blyssed folk, withowte walles,
On gras or leves in parfyt quiete.
No down of fetheres, ne no bleched shete
Was kyd to hem, but in surte they slepte;
Hir hertes were al on withowte galles,
Everych of hem his feith to oother kepte.

Unforged was the hawberke and the plate;
The lambyssh poeple, voyde of alle vyse,
Hadden no fantesye to debate,
But eche of hem wolde oother wel cheryce;
No pride, non envye, non avaryce,
No lord, no taylage by no tyranye;
Umblesse and Pes, good Feith, the emperice,

[*Line lost.*]

34 places wyldnesse. 42 *in* (2) *om.* 44 *On* or; joye reste and quiete. 50 voyded. 56 *Skeat suggests:* Fulfilled erthe of olde curtesye; *the editor:* And Charite, thise koude hem beter gye.

Yit was nat Juppiter the lykerous,
That fyrst was fadyr of delicasie,
Come in this world, ne Nembrot, desyrous
To regne, had nat maad his towres hye.
Allas! allas! now may men wepe and crye,
For in owre dayes nis but covetyse,
Dowblenesse, and tresoun, and envye,
Poyson, manslawhtre, and mordre in sondry wyse.

61 *men om.* 64 Poyson and.

ADAM SCRIVENER

Chauciers wordes a Geffrey unto Adame his owen scryveyne.

Adam scryveyne, if ever it thee byfalle,
Boece or Troylus for to wryten nuwe,
Under thy long lokkes thowe most have the scalle,
But affter my makyng thowe wryte more truwe;
So offt a daye I mot thy werk renuwe,
It to corect, and eke to rubbe and scrape,
And al is thorugh thy necglygence and rape.

FORTUNE

Le pleintif countre Fortune.

This wrecched worldes transmutacioun,
As wele or wo, now pore and now honour,
Withowten ordyr or wis descresyoun,
Governed is by Fortunes errour.
But natheles, the lakke of hyr favowr
Ne may nat don me syngen, thowh I deye,
'Jay tout perdu mon temps et mon labour;'
For fynaly, Fortune, I the deffye.

Yit is me left the lyht of my resoun,
To knowen frend fro foo in thi merowr.
So mochel hath yit thy whirlynge up and down
Itawht me for to knowen in an howr.
But trewely, no fors of thi reddowr
To hym that over hymself hath the maystrye!
My suffysaunce shal be my socour,
For fynaly, Fortune, I thee deffye.

O Socrates, thou stidfast chaumpyoun,
She never myhte be thi tormentowr;
Thow never dreddest hyr oppressyoun,
Ne in hyr chere fownde thow no savour.
Thow knewe wel deseyte of hyr colour
And that hir moste worshipe is to lye.
I know hir ek a fals dissimulour,
For fynaly, Fortune, I the deffye!

Le respounce de fortune a pleintif.

No man ys wrechchyd, but hymself yt wene,
And he that hath hymself hath suffisaunce.

1 worlde is. 2 poeere. 12 knowe. 18 myht. 21 the deseyte. 22 most. 23 knew.

Whi seysthow thanne, y am to the so kene,
That hast thyself owt of my governaunce?
Sey thus, "graunt mercy of thyn haboundaunce,
That thow hast lent or this." Why wolt thou stryve?
What, woost thow yit how y the wol avaunce?
And ek thow hast thy beste frende alyve.

I have the tawht devisyoun bytwene
Frend of effect and frende of cowntenaunce,
The nedeth nat the galle of no hyene
That cureth eyen derkyd for penaunce.
Now seist thow cleer that were in ignoraunce.
Yit halt thin ancre, and yit thow mayst aryve
Ther bownte berth the keye of my substaunce:
And ek thou hast thy beste frende alyve.

How manye have I refused to sustene,
Syn I the fostred have in thy plesaunce!
Wolthow thanne make a statute on thy quene
That I shal ben ay at thy ordynaunce?
Thow born art in my regne of varyaunce,
Abowte the wheel with oother most thow dryve;
My loore is bet than wikke is thi grevaunce,
And ek thou hast thy beste frende alyve.

Le Respounce du pleintif countre fortune.

Thy loore y dempne! it is adversyte.
My frend maysthow nat reven, blynde goddesse.
That I thy frendes knowe, I thanke to the;
Tak hem agayn, lat hem go lye on presse.
The negardye in kepynge hyr rychesse
Prenostik is, thow wolt hir towr asayle;
Wikke appetyt comth ay before sykenesse,
In general this rewle may nat fayle.

27 *to om.* 43 quyene.

Le respounce de fortune countre le pleintif.

Thow pynchest at my mutabylyte,
For I the lente a drope of my rychesse;
And now me lykyth to withdrawe me,
Whi sholdysthow my realte apresse?
The see may ebbe and flowen moore or lesse,
The welkne hath myht to shyne, reyne, or hayle;
Ryht so mot I kythen my brutelnesse,
In general this rewle may nat fayle.

Lo, the execussyoun of the majeste
That al purveyeth of his ryhtwysnesse,
That same thinge 'Fortune' clepyn ye,
Ye blynde beestys ful of lewednesse!
The hevene hath proprete of sykyrnesse,
This world hath ever resteles travayle.
Thy laste day is ende of myn intresse,
In general, this rewele may nat fayle.

Lenvoy de fortune.

Prynses, I prey yow, of yowre gentilesse,
Lat nat this man on me thus crye and pleyne,
And I shal quyte yow yowre bysynesse.
At my requeste, as thre of yow or tweyne,
That but yow lest releve hym of hys peyne,
Preyeth hys beste frend of his noblesse,
That to som betere estat he may attayne.

65 *the om.;* excussyoun. 71 intersse. 78 best.

MERCILES BEAUTE: A TRIPLE ROUNDEL

I.

Yowre yen two wolle sle me sodenly,
I may the beaute of them not sustene,
So wondeth it thorowout my herte kene.
And but your word will helen hastily
Mi hertis wounde, while that hit is grene,
Your yen two wol sle me sodenly,
I may the beaute of hem not sustene.

Upon my trouth I sey yow feithfully
That ye ben of my liffe and deth the quene;
For with my deth the trouthe shal be sene.
Your yen two wol sle me sodenly
I may the beaute of them not sustene
So wondeth hit thorowout my herte kene.

II.

So hath yowr beaute fro your herte chaced
Pitee that me navailleth not to pleyn,
For Danger halt your mercy in his cheyne.
Giltles my deth thus han ye me purchaced;
I sey yow soth, me nedeth not to fayn.
So hath your beaute fro your herte chaced
Pite that me navailleth not to pleyn.

Allas that nature hath in yow compased
So grete beaute, that no man may atteyn
To mercy, though he sterve for the peyn.

1 two yen.
6, 7, 11, 12, 13, etc. The refrain only indicated by two words. 10 trouth.

So hath your beaute fro your herte chaced
Pite that me navailleth not to pleyn
For Danger halt your mercy in his cheyne.

III.

Syn I fro Love escaped am so fat,
I nevere thenk to ben in his prison lene;
Sin I am free, I counte him not a bene.
He may answere and sey this or that;
I do no fors, I speke right as I mene,
Syn I fro Love escaped am so fat
I nevere thenk to ben in his prison lene.

Love hath my name istrike out of his sclat,
And he is strike out of my bokes clene
For evermo, this is non other mene,
Syn I fro Love escaped am so fat,
I nevere thenk to ben in his prison lene;
Sin I am free I counte him not a bene.

TO ROSEMOUNDE: A BALADE

Madame, ye ben of al beaute shryne
As fer as cercled is the mapamonde;
For as the cristall glorious ye shyne,
And lyke ruby ben your chekys rounde.
Therwith ye ben so mery and so joconde
That at a revell whan that I se you dance,
It is an oynement unto my wounde,
Thogh ye to me ne do no daliaunce!

For thogh I wepe of teres ful a tyne,
Yet may that wo myn herte nat confounde;
Your seemly voys that ye so smal outtwyne
Makyth my thoght in joye and blys habounde.
So curtaysly I go, with love bounde,
That to myself I sey, in my penaunce,
"Suffyseth me to love you, Rosemounde,
Thogh ye to me do no daliaunce!"

Nas never pyk walwed in galauntyne
As I in love am walwed and iwounde;
For which ful ofte I of myself devyne
That I am trewe Tristam the secounde.
My love may not refreyde be nor affounde;
I brenne ay in an amorouse plesaunce.
Do what ye lyst; I wyl your thral be founde,
Thogh ye to me ne do no daliance.

8 Thoght. 11 semy; *smal* fynall (Sk). 20 trew.

TRUTH

Fle fro the pres, and dwelle with sothefastnesse,
Suffise thin owen thing, thei it be smal;
For hordę hathę hate, and clymbyng tykelnesse,
Prees hathę envye, and welę blent overal.
Savourę no more thanne the byhovę schal;
Reule weel thiself, that other folk canst reedę;
And trouthę schal delyvere, it is no dredę.

Tempest the nought al croked to redresse,
In trust of hire that tourneth as a bal.
Myche welę stant in litel besynesse;
Bywar therfore to spurne ageyns an al;
Stryve not as dothę the crokkę with the wal.
Dauntę thiself, that dauntest otherés dedę;
And trouthę shal delyvere, it is no dredę.

That the is sent, receyve in buxhumnesse;
The wrestlyng for the worlde axeth a fal.
Here is non home, here nys but wyldernesse.
Forthę, pylgryme, forthę! forthę, beste, out of thi stal!
Knowę thi contre! loke up! thonk God of al!
Holdę the heye-weye, and lat thi gost the ledę;
And trouthę shal delyvere, it is no dredę.

[*L'envoy.*]

Therfore, thou Vache, leve thine olde wrechedenesse;
Unto the world leve now to be thral.
Crie Hym mercy, that of Hys hie godnesse
Made the of nought, and in especial
Drawę unto Hym, and pray in general
For the, and eke for other, hevenelyche medę;
And trouthę schal delyvere, it is no dredę.

GENTILESSE

The firste stocke, fader of gentilnesse,
What man desireth gentil for to be
Must folowe his trace, and alle his wittes dresse
Vertu to love, and vyces for to flee;
For unto vertu longeth dignite,
And nought the reverse, savely dar I deme
Al were he miter, croune, or dyademe.

This firste stok was full of rightwisenesse,
Trewe of his word, sobre, pitous, and fre,
Clene of his goost, and loved besynesse
Ayenst the vyse of slouthe, in honestee;
And but his heire love vertue as did he,
He is nought gentil, thogh he riche seme,
Al were he myter, croune, or dyademe.

Vices may well be heire to olde richesse,
But ther may no man, as men may well se,
Biquethe his heire his vertuous noblesse;
That is aproprid unto no degre,
But to the first fader in magestee,
That maketh his heires hem that can hym queme.
Al were he mytre, croune, or dyademe.

7 coroune miter. 8 first. 14, 21 coroune. 15 Vicesse. 17 vertues noblisse. 20 *can om.*

ENVOY TO SCOGAN

Litera directa de Scogon per. G. C.

To-brokene ben the statutis hye in hevene
That creat were eternally to dure,
Syn that I se the bryghte goddis sevene
Mow wepe and wayle, and passioun endure,
As may in erthe a mortal creature.
Allas, fro whennes may this thyng procede?
Of whiche errour I deye almost for drede.

Be word eterne whilhom was it schape
That fro the fifte serkele, in no manere,
Ne myghte a drope of teeris doun escape;
But now so wepyth Venus in hir spere,
That with hire teris sche wele drenche us here.
Allas, Skogon, this is for thyn offence,
Thu causist this deluge of pestelence.

Hast thu not seyd, in blaspheme of the goddis,
Thour pride, or thour thy grete rechelesnesse,
Swich thyng as in the lawe of love forbode is,
That for thy ladi saw not thy distresse,
Therfore thou yeve hire up at Mychelmesse!
Allas, Scogon, of olde folk ne yong,
Was nevere erst Scogon blamyd for his tong!

Thow drow in scorn Cupid ek to record
Of thilke rebel word that thou hast spoken;
For whiche he wele no lengere be thy lord.
And thow his bowe, Scogon, be not broken,
He wil not with his arwis ben iwroken
On the, ne me, ne none of oure figure;
We schal of him have neyther hurt ne cure.

1 *hye om.* 4 pascioun. 6 whens. 11 his. 14 deluye. 17 forbodyn. 20 no thong. 23 the ilke.

Now sertys, frend, I drede of thyn onhap,
Lest for thy gilt the wreche of love procede
On alle hem, that ben hore and round of schap,
That ben so likly folk in love to spede.
Thanne schal we for oure labour han no mede;
But wel I wit, thou wilt answere and seye,
"Lo, olde Grisil leste to ryme and pleye."

Nay, Scogon, sey not so, for I me excuse,
God helpe me so! in no rym douteles,
Ne thynke I nevere of slep to wake my muse,
That rustyth in myn schethe stylle in pes.
Whil I was yong, I putte it forth in pres;
But al schal passyn that men prose or ryme,
Tak every man his torn, as for his tyme.

Envoy.

Scogan, that knelist at the wellis hed
Of grace, of alle honour and worthynesse, .i. Wyndisore
In the ende of wich strem I am dul as ded,
Forgete in solitarie wildirnes, i. a Grenewych
Yit, Scogan, thynk on Tullius kyndenes;
Mynne thy frend, there it may fructifie,
Farewel, and loke thou nevere eft Love defye!

39 schede. 47 thyng. 48 Mynewe.

LAK OF STEDFASTNESSE

Geffrey Chauncier sende these Balades to kyng Richard.

Sumtyme this world was so stedefast and stable
That mannes word was obligacioun,
But now it is so fals and disceyvable
That word and dede, as in conclusioun,
Ben nothyng on, for turned up so doun
Is al this world for mede and wilfulnesse,
That al is lost for lak of stedefastnesse.

What maketh this world to be so variable
But lust that folkis han in discensioun?
For nowadayes a man is holde unable
But yf he can, by som collusioun,
Do to his neyghbur wrong or oppressioun.
What causeth that but wilful wrecchednesse,
That al is lost for lak of stedefastnesse?

Trouthe is put doun, resoun is holde fable;
Vertu hath now no domynacioun;
Pyte exiled, no man is mercyable;
Thurgh covetyse is blent discrecioun;
The world hath mad a permutacioun
Fro ryght to wrong, fro trouthe to fikulnesse,
That al is lost for lak of stedefastnesse.

Lenvoy.

O prince, desyre to be honurable,
Cherysshe thi folk, and hate extorcioun;
Suffre no thyng that may be reproveable
To thyn estate don in thi regioun.
Shewe forth thi swerd of castigacioun,
Drede God, do lawe, love trouthe and rightwesnesse,
And dryve thi peple agayn to stedefastnesse.

LENVOY DE CHAUCER A BUKTON

My maister Bukton, whan of Criste our kyng
Was axed, what ys trouthe or sothefastnesse,
He nat a worde answerde to that axinge,
As who saith: "Noo man is al trewe, I gesse."
And therfore, though I highte to expresse
The sorwe and woo that is in mariage,
I dar not writen of hyt noo wikkednesse,
Leste y myself falle eft in swich dotage,

I wol nat seyn, how that hyt is the cheyne
Of Sathanas, on which he gnaweth evere;
But I dar seyn, were he oute of his peyne,
As by his wille he wolde be bounde nevere.
But thilke doted foole that efte hath levere
Ycheyned be than out of prison crepe,
God lete him never fro his woo dissevere,
Ne noo man him bewayle, though he wepe.

But yet, lest thow doo worse, take a wyfe;
Bet ys to wedde than brenne in worse wise,
But thow shalt have sorwe on thy flessh thy lyfe,
And ben thy wifes thral, as seyn these wise;
And yf that hooly writte may nat suffyse,
Experience shal the teche, so may happe,
That the were lever to be take in Frise,
Than eft to falle of weddynge in the trappe.

Envoy.

This lytel writte, proverbes, or figure
I sende yow, take kepe of hyt, I rede.

5 hight. 13 *efte* ofte. 24 *to om.*

Unwise is he that kan noo wele endure,
Yf thow be siker, put the nat in drede.
The Wyfe of Bathe I pray yow that ye rede
Of this matere that we have on honde,
God graunte yow your lyfe frely to lede
In fredam, for ful harde is to be bonde.

32 it is.

THE COMPLEYNT OF VENUS

And filowing begynnethe a balade translated out of frenshe into englisshe by Chaucier Geffrey the frenshe made sir Otes de Grauntsome knight Savosyen.

Ther nys so hye coumfort to my plesaunce,
Whane that I am in any hevynesse,
As for to have leyser of remembraunce
Upon the manhoode and the worthynesse,
Upon the trouthe and the stedfastnesse
Of him, whos I am alweys, whyle I may dure;
Ther aught to blamen me no creature,
For he is croppe and roote of gentylesse.

In him is bountee, wysdam, and gouvernaunce,
Weel more thanne any mannes wit kan gesse;
For grace hathe wolde so ferfoorthe him avaunce,
That of knighthoode he is parfyt rychchesse.
Honnour honourethe him for his noblesse;
Therto so wel hathe fortuned him Nature,
That I am his for ever, I him ensure,
For every wight preysethe his gentylesse.

And nought-withstanding al his souffisaunce,
His gentyle hert is of so gret humblesse
To me, in worde, in werk, in countenaunce,
And me to serve is al his besynesse,
That I am sette in verray sikurnesse;
Thus aught me wele to blesse myn aventure,
Sith that him list me serven and honneure,
For every wight preysethe his gentylesse.

II.

Nowe certes, Love, hit is right covenable
That men ful soore abye thy noble thing,

As waake abedde, and fasting at the table,
Weping to laughe, and sing in compleyning,
And doune to caste vysage and looking,
Offtymes to chaunge huwe and countenaunce,
Pleye in sleping, and dremen at the daunce,
Al the revers of any glaade felyng.

Thaughe jalousye wer hanged by a kable,
Sheo wolde al knowe, thorughe hir espying;
Ther doothe no wight no thing so raysonnable
That al nys harme in hir ymagynyng;
Thus deere abought is love in gyving,
Whiche offt he gyvethe withoute ordeynaunce,
As sorowe enoughe, and lytel of plesaunce,
Al the revers of every glaade feeling.

A lytel tyme his gyfft is agreable,
But ful encoumberous is the using;
For soutyle jalousye the deceyvable
Ful offten-tymes causethe destourbing,
Thus beon we ever in dreed souffering,
In nouncertaine we langwisshe in penaunce,
And have wel offt many an herd meschaunce,
Al the revers of every glaade feelyng.

III.

But certes, Love, I say not in suche wyse,
That for teschape oute of youre lace I ment,
For I so long have beon in youre servyce
That for to leet of wol I never assente;
No force, thaughe Jalousye me more tourment,
Souffisethe me to seon him whane I may,
And therfore, certes, unto myn eending day,
To love him best ne shal I never repent.

And certes, Love, whanne I me weel avyse
On any estate, that man may represent,
Thane have yee maked me, thorughe youre fraunchyse,
Cheese the best, that ever on eorthe went.
Nowe love weele, hert, and looke thou never stent,
And let the jalouse put it nowe in assaye,
That for no peyne ne shal I never sey naye,
To love him best, ne never to repent.

Herte, to the hit aught enoughe souffyse,
That Love so hye a grace hathe to thee sent,
To cheese the worthyest of alle wyse,
And mooste agreable, unto myn entent;
Seeche nowe no firther, neyther wey ner went,
Sythe I have souffysaunce unto my paye,
Thus wol I eonde this compleynt or this laye,
To love him best, and never to repent.

Lenvoye.

Pryncesse, resceyvethe this complaynt in gree,
Unto youre excellent benignytee
Dyrect, affter my lytel souffysaunce;
For eelde, that in my spiryt doullethe me,
Hathe of thendyting al the subtylytee
Welnyeghe byrafft out of my remembraunce;
And eeke to me it is right gret penaunce,
Sith ryme in Englisshe hathe suche skarsytee,
To folowen word by word the curyosytee
Of Graunsome, flour of hem that make in Fraunce.

Hit is sayde that Graunsome made this Last balade for Venus resembled to my lady of york aunswering the complaynt of Mars.

65 Hert. 72 *To* And.

THE COMPLAYNT OF CHAUCER TO HIS PURSE

To yow, my purse, and to noon other wight
Complayn I, for ye be my lady dere.
I am so sory now that ye been lyght,
For certes, but yf ye make me hevy chere,
Me were as leef be layde upon my bere;
For whiche unto your mercy thus I crye,
Beeth hevy ageyne, or elles mote I dye.

Now vouchethsauf this day or hyt be nyght,
That I of yow the blisful soune may here,
Or see your colour lyke the sonne bryght,
That of yelownesse hadde never pere.
Ye be my lyfe, ye be myn hertys stere,
Quene of comfort and of good companye;
Beth hevy ayeyne or elles moote I dye.

Now, purse, that ben to me my lyves lyght,
And saveour as doun in this worlde here,
Oute of this toune helpe me thurgh your myght,
Syn that ye wole nat bene my tresorere;
For I am shave as nye as is a ffrere,
But yet I pray unto your curtesye,
Bethe hevy ayen, or elles moote I dye.

Lenvoy de Chaucer.

O conquerour of Brutes Albyoun,
Whiche that by lygne and free eleccioun
Been verray kynge, this song to yow I sende!
And ye, that mowen alle myn harme amende,
Have mynde upon my supplicacioun!

PROVERBS

What shal thees clothes many fold,
Loo, this hoote somers day?

Affter gret heet komethe cold,
No man cast his pilche away.

Quod Chaucer.

Of this worlde the wyde compas,
Hit wol not in myn armes tweyne;

Who so mychel wol embrace,
Lytel ther-of he shal destreyne.

Quod Chaucer.

WOMMANLY NOBLESSE

Balade that Chaucier made.

So hath my herte caught in remembraunce
Yowre beaute hoole, and stedfast governaunce,
  Yowre vertues al, and yowre hie noblesse,
That yow to serve is set al my plesaunce.
So wel me likith youre womanly contenaunce,
  Youre fresshe fetures and youre comlinesse,
  That while I live, my hert to his maystresse
Yow hath ful chose, in triew perseveraunce,
  Never to chaunge for no maner distresse.

And sith I shal do this observaunce
Al my lyve withouten displesaunce,
  Yow for to serve with al my besynesse,
[Take my service in gre, and nat grevaunce,]
And have me somwhat in your souvenaunce.
  My woful herte suffrith grete duresse;
  And [lo] how humb[le]ly, with al symplesse,
My wil I conforme to your ordynaunce,
As you best list, my peynes for to redresse.

Considryng eek how I hange in balaunce
In your servyce; swiche, lo, is my chaunce,
  Abidyng grace, whan that yowre gentilnesse
Of my grete wo list doon allegeaunce,
And with your pite me som wyse avaunce,
  In ful rebatyng of myn hevynesse;
  And thinkith be raison, that wommanly noblesse
Shuld nat desyre til do the outraunce
  Theras she fyndith non unbuxumnesse.

14 *Line lost; the editor suggests the above.*

Lenvoye.

Auctour of norture, lady of plesaunce,
  Soveraigne of beaute, floure of wommanhede,
Take ye non hede unto myn ignoraunce,
  But this receyvith of your goodlyhede,
Thynkyng that I have caught in remembraunce
Yowre beaute hole, your stidefast governaunce.

NEWEFANGELNESSE

Against Women Inconstant.

(1)

Madame, for your newefangelnesse,
Manie a servaunt have ye put oute of grace.
I take my leve of your unstedfastnesse;
For wel I wote, while ye to lyve have space,
Ye kunnought love ful half yeer in a place,
To newe thinges your lust is ever kene,
In sted of blue, thus may ye were al grene.

(2)

Right as a mirrour, that nothing may enpresse,
But lightly as it cometh, so mot it pace,
So fareth your love; your werkes bereth witnesse.
Ther is no feith that may your hert enbrace;
But as a wedercok, that turneth his face
With every wynd, ye fare, and that is sene;
In sted of bliwe, thus may ye were al grene.

(3)

Ye might be shrined for your brotilnesse
Bettir thanne Dalide, Cresside, or Candace,
For evere in changeng stondeth your sikernesse;
That tacche may no wight fro your hert arace;
Yif ye lese oon, ye kunne wel tweine purchace;
All light for somer—ye wote wel what I mene—
In sted of blewe, thus may ye were al grene.

2 of your. 6 so kene. 15 *your om.*

Explicit.

PREFACE TO THE TREATISE ON THE ASTROLABE

Litell Lowys my sone, I have perceived wele by certeyne evidences thine abilite to lerne sciencez touchinge noumbres and proporciouns; and as wel considere I thy bisi preyere in special to lerne the Tretis of the Astrelabie. Than, for as mechel as a philosofre seith, "He wrappeth him in his frend, that condescendeth to the rihtful preiers of his frend," therfor have I geven the a suffisaunt Astralabie as for owre orizonte, compowned after the latitude of Oxenford; upon which, by mediacion of this litel tretis, I purpose to teche thee a certein of conclusions apertenyng to the same instrument. I seye a certein of conclusiouns for three causes. The furste cause is this: truste wel that alle the conclusiouns that han ben fownde, or elles possibli myhten be fownde in so noble an instrument as an Astralabie, ben unknowe perfitly to any mortal man in this regioun, as I suppose. Another cause is this: that sothly in any tretis of the Astrelabie that I have seyn, there ben some conclusions that wole nat in alle thinges performen hir byhestes; and some of hem ben to harde to thy tendre age of ten yer to conseyve.

This tretis, divided in fyve parties, wole I shewe the under ful lighte rewles and naked wordes in Englissh, for Latyn ne kanstow yit but smal, my lite sone. But natheles, suffise to thee thise trewe conclusiouns in Englissh, as wel as suffiseth to thise noble clerkes Grekes thise same conclusiouns in Grek, and to Arabiens in Arabik, and to Jewes in Ebrew, and to the Latyn folk in Latyn; whiche Latyn folk han hem furst out of othre diverse langages, and writen

in hir owne tonge, that is to sein, in Latyn. And God wot, that in alle thise langages, and many mo, han thise conclusiouns ben suffisantly lerned and tawht, and yit by diverse rewles, ryht as diverse pathes leden diverse folk the rihte wey to Roome. Now wol I prey mekly every discret persone that redith or herith this litel tretis, to have my rewde endytyng for excused, and my superfluite of wordes, for two causes: the firste cause is, for that curios enditing and hard sentence is ful hevy atones for swich a child to lerne. And the seconde cause is this; that sothly me semeth betre to writen unto a child twies a good sentence, than he forget it ones. And Lowis, yif so be that I shewe thee in my lihte Englissh as trewe conclusiouns touching this matere, and nawht only as trewe but as many and as subtil conclusiouns as ben shewed in Latyn in ani commune tretis of the Astrelabie, kon me the more thank; and preye God save the kyng, that is lord of this langage, and alle that him feyth bereth and obeieth, everech in his degree, the more and the lasse. But considere wel, that I ne usurpe nat to have fownde this werk of my labour or of myn engin; I nam but a lewd compilatour of the labour of olde Astrolog[i]ens, and have hit translated in myn Englissh only for thi doctrine; and with this swerd shal I slen envie.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

I. **Pronunciation.** §1-4.

II. **Language.** §5-33.

III. **Notes on Special Usages.** §34-39.

IV. **Meter.** §40-42.

V. **Life.** §43-50.

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VII. **Chaucer's Reading.** §53-58.

VIII. **The Human Comedy of the "Canterbury Tales."** §59.

I. Pronunciation.

§1. **Pronunciation of the Middle English of Chaucer.** The beginner will find the vowels his chief difficulty in Chaucerian pronunciation. The consonants are pronounced nearly as by a Scotchman today; that is to say, the **r** is trilled, and **gh** has the sound of the Scottish **ch** in **loch.** Words derived from the French retained more of the French distinctness of utterance; **-cion, -tion, -sion, -ssion** kept the distinct **ci-on, ti-on, ssi-on,** with no **sh** sound. French **-ge,** as in **age,** retained the soft **zh sound. Kn** as in German **Knabe,** kept the original sound; and **ng** retained the full sound of the **g** as in **anger,** not as in **singer. Th** in certain proper names probably was **tt,** as in **Thopas, Atthenes;** elsewhere as in modern English. Other consonants were sounded nearly as they are today.

§2. The vowels present more difficulty. In general, one should keep in mind the values of vowels in Continental languages, rather than in modern English. The three most difficult rules to remember are (1) **a** always as in German **Mann** or **Vater;** (2) **e** in long syllables always as **è** or **é** in French, not as in **mere, weed;** (3) doubling of vowels does not change the sound except to lengthen it; thus **boote** is like modern **boat,** not modern **boot; heede** is like modern **hayed,** not like our **heed.** The other rules are simple, and easily kept in mind; most errors are due to forgetfulness of the rules just given.

§3. **Table of vowel-sounds.**

Short.	Long.
a as in Ger. **Mann.**	**aa, ā** as in **father.**
e as in **then.**	**ē** open as in **where,** or **ē** closed as in **way.** Chaucer rarely rimed open and close long **e** (ex. **lere, here**); but the rime does occur. Most Americans can make little distinction in the sounds.
i, y as in **inn.**	**ī, ȳ** as in **gasoline.** Found in words which today have the diphthongal **i** sound: life, hide, child, plight (ME **plit**). But note that ME words in **-ght** have the short **i: lyght, myghte.**
o as in Ger. **Gott.**	**ō** open as in **more,** and **ō** close as in **boat.** The distinction is of little value to the beginner. Chaucer evidently felt free to break the rule against riming **ō** open and close.*
u as in **full,** rarely as in **cup.** Written often **o** in words which today have a **ŭ** sound: **moche** (much), **sonne** (sun), **ronne** (run), **companye;** also in **dore, spore, wolle.**	**ū** as in **compute, suit.**

ay, ey as **ai** in **straits.**
ou, ow as in French **doux,** English **you.**

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* By the use of the etymologies given in the Glossary, the student can readily distinguish between open and close **ō**, open and close **ē**, if he observes the rules here given: (1) ME open **ē** is found in words which in AS had **ǣ, e, ēa**; (2) ME close **ē** is found in words which in AS had **ē, e** before **-ld, ēo,** and also in ME final **ē**; (3) ME open **ō** is found in words which in AS had **ā, â** (from **ǣ, ea**), **o** in open syllables, and before **-ld**; (4) ME close **ō** is found in words which in AS had **ō** (also in ON **ó**).

Diphthongs.

au as **ou** in **house**, or as **au** in German **aus.**

ew, ĕ plus **oo,*** **fewe, newe, trewe** (not as in modern pronunciation).

oi as in modern speech, **joye.**

§4. **Doubling** of vowels, as has been said, indicates a long vowel only, not a different sound from the single vowel, as in our writing. Doubled consonants were, as in modern German, given full value; **son-ne, ron-ne.**

II. Language.

§5. **Chaucer's Language.** Chaucer's language was that of the London of his day, which grammarians now call the Southeast Midland dialect of Middle English. Soon after his time this dialect became the standard English speech, especially after the establishment of Caxton's press at Westminster (1477); so that our own literary language descends directly from Chaucer's dialect.

§6. Before the stage known as Middle English, in the centuries previous to 1150, lies the stage which we call Anglo-Saxon, or Old English, the chief monument of which is the epic poem *Beowulf.* Anglo-Saxon may be distinguished from Middle English by its more elaborate system of inflections in nouns and verbs, and its freedom from the influence of French. Apart from some words of Danish or Norse (Scandinavian) origin, and a very few from Latin, Old English was a "self-supporting" tongue.

§7. Middle English, on the other hand, received many words from French, either through the dialect of the Normans in England (Anglo-French, "AF"), or later through the Old French of the Continent ("OF"). The inflections which in Anglo-Saxon are only slightly less numerous than in classical Latin, were mostly lost, or reduced to a common stage, that known as final **-e.**

§8. **Final -e.** This suffix, the distinguishing feature of Middle English, has been long lost as a syllable, though retained in the spelling of many words. In Chaucer's day it was already beginning to disappear in pronunciation; but

* Almost as in our mimicking of a dandy's **vewy** for **very.**

the memory of it was still sufficiently fresh in England to permit its use in the counted syllables, chiefly unaccented, of poetry. The similar use of **-e** in contemporary French poetry, which had a great influence on English literature, no doubt assisted its preservation. On the other hand, some poets of Chaucer's day did not employ the final **-e** as a pronounced syllable. William Parys, the squire of Thomas Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick—whose son, Lord William Beauchamp, was a friend of Chaucer's—wrote a poem, *St. Cristine,* in 1397, in which the **-e** is practically non-existent.* It is certain, also, that Chaucer felt free, in some circumstances, to neglect or slur this syllable—that is to say, to count ten syllables in a line of decasyllabic verse, regardless of some of the syllables ending in **-e, -es, -ed,** and even **-eth.**

§9. The manuscripts of Chaucer's poems, which now exist, were written after Chaucer's death. In the case of the shorter poems, the manuscripts are perhaps fifty years later. They exhibit, to various degrees, many final **-e's** which were never sounded in speech, since they did not represent any syllabic ending in Anglo-Saxon or Old French. As we do not possess any manuscripts in Chaucer's handwriting, we do not know whether he was in the habit of writing these or not; in other words, whether the manuscripts of Chaucer in any way represent his own spelling. Believing that any reconstruction of Chaucer's spelling, from the extant manuscripts, is impossible at present, the editor prefers to exhibit the actual spelling of a trustworthy manuscript of each work.† If the student learns carefully the following rules for the

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* The **-e's** in black type in the stanza below would have been normally sounded in Chaucer. This copy of Parys is from MS. Arundel 168, folio 4b, Brit. Mus.

Seint Cristyne, helpe thorough thi prayer
That we may fare the better for the,
That hath ben longe in prisoun here,
The Ile of Man, that stronge cuntre;
Sir Thomas Beawchamp, an erle was he,
In Warwikshire was his power,
Now is he of so povre degre,
He hath no man, save on squier.

† The marks of abbreviation above final r, p, and n (where **-e** is possibly meant) have not been expanded. Otherwise the MS. text spellings are used.

sounding of final **-e**, the spelling of the manuscripts will give him no trouble; and he will understand better the history of Chaucer criticism and of our own texts than from a so-called "normalized" text.

§10. Final **-e** generally appears in the Middle English poetry of Chaucer with syllabic value in the following forms:

(a) In certain nouns of Anglo-Saxon or other Germanic origin.* Ex. **bere, bowe, drope, erthe, herte, eye, leche, sone, answere, bote, comynge, mayde, cloude, tere, drede.**

(b) In nouns of Romance (Old French) origin which originally ended in **-e** mute. Ex. **age, chere, cure, distresse, gyse, lettre, madame, route, signe, substaunce, violence, vileynye.**

(c) In some Romance nouns which did not originally end in **-e. Ex. travayle, mene.**

(d) In certain nouns preceded by prepositions, representing an old (petrified) dative in **-e.** Ex. **on honde, in toune.**

(e) In certain adjectives of Germanic origin. Ex. **grene, mylde, thikke.**

(f) In Romance adjectives, ending in **-e** mute. Ex. **digne, huge, humble.**

(g) In some Romance adjectives which did not end in **-e** mute. Ex. **clere, comune, secounde.**

(h) In adjectives preceded by a possessive or demonstrative pronoun, or by the definite article; i.e., in the "definite" or "weak" form of adjectives. Ex. **the beste rym, my dere foo, this swete preest.**

(i) In adjectives in the vocative, preceding their noun. Ex. **O longe day! Now, faire lady! Leve brother! Seynte Marie!**†

(j) In the plural of monosyllabic adjectives, and occasionally of polysyllabic adjectives where the meter may require it. Ex. **gode men, longe nyghtes, the frendlyeste men.**

(k) In adverbs of Anglo-Saxon origin, ending in **-e.** Ex. **clene, depe, lowde, sodeynliche.** But **ryght** and **lyk.**

(l) In certain particles of adverbial or prepositional use. Ex. **aboute, bothe, bysyde, sone.**

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* See §15 below for details. The etymologies in the Glossary are intended to guide the student in observing these nouns, and similar sources of **-e.**

† On **seynte**, see the Glossary.

(m) In verbs, in

(1) The first person singular, present indicative: **I wake.**

(2) The plural present indicative: **We wake (waketh, waken).**

(3) The singular and plural present subjunctive: **If he wake.**

(4) The imperative second person singular and plural of most weak verbs: **Leve wel.**

(5) The infinitive: **To telle** (tellen).

(6) The verbal noun: **Comynge.**

(7) The perfect participle of strong verbs: **She was i-founde.**

(8) The preterite indicative, first and third persons singular, of weak verbs (ending in **-ed, -t,** in modern English): **I wenede, wende.**

(9) Preterite indicative, second person singular of strong verbs: **thou founde, thou woke.**

(10) Preterite plural of all verbs: **they wente, we songe.**

(11) Preterite subjunctive, all verbs: **er that he sawe.**

§11. Final **en** appears in

(a) The plural of certain nouns: **sustren, shoon.**

(b) Certain particles: **aboven, withouten.**

(c) The infinitive: **to singen.**

(d) The plural forms of verbs: **they wenten, we that singen.**

(e) The past participle of strong verbs.

(f) Reflexive pronouns: **myselven.**

§12. Final **es** appears in

(a) The possessive singular of nouns: **wommannes counseil.**

(b) The plural of nouns: **dogges, hogges.**

(c) Some adverb forms: **ones, twyes.**

The above list is intended for ready reference only. Chaucer's system of inflections, with their chief Anglo-Saxon equivalents, are given in fuller detail in the sections that follow.

§13. **The Noun.** In Anglo-Saxon nouns are divided into two classes, according as the stem originally ended in a vowel or in a consonant. Vowel-stems make up the strong, stems in **-n** the weak declension. Other consonantal stems are grouped by themselves. Owing to the loss in primitive or prehistoric Anglo-Saxon of final short vowels and of final

consonants of stems, it is not possible in Anglo-Saxon to distinguish all these classes at first glance. Comparative study of other Germanic tongues, such as Gothic and Old Norse, has therefore been employed. Various case-endings had also been lost before the historic period of Anglo-Saxon, so that the English language, at its earliest known stage, was already a language of partly leveled inflections. The Middle English of Chaucer, and our own modern English, represent further steps along this same course of development.

§14. It is not proposed here to give an outline of all Anglo-Saxon inflections, but only of such as are perhaps sufficient to illustrate the development of Chaucerian English. A few only of the several types of noun-inflection are given.

a-stems.

		masc.	M. Eng.	neut.	M. Eng.
Sing.	Nom.	**stān**	(stoon)	**word**	(word)
	Gen.	**stānes**	(stoones)	**wordes**	(wordes)
	Dat.	**stāne**		**worde**	
	Acc.	**stān**		**word**	
Pl.	Nom. Acc.	**stānas**	(stoones)	**word**	(wordes)
	Gen.	**stāna**		**worda**	
	Dat.	**stānum**		**wordum**	

		ō-stems.		i-stems.	
		fem.	M. Eng.	fem.	M. Eng.
Sing.	Nom.	**giefu, -o**	(gyft)	**cwēn**	(quene)
	Gen.	**giefe**	(gyftes)	**cwēne**	(quenes)
	Dat.	**giefe**		**cwēne**	
	Acc.	**giefe**			
Pl.	Nom. Acc.	**giefe, -a**	(gyftes)	**cwēne**	(quenes)
	Gen.	**giefa, (-ena)**		**cwēna**	
	Dat.	**giefum**		**cwēnum**	

n-declension

		fem.	M. Eng.
Sing.	Nom.	**tunge**	(tunge)
	Gen.	**tungan**	(tunges)
	Dat.	**tungan**	
	Acc.	**tungan**	
Pl.	Nom. Acc.	**tungan**	(tunges)
	Gen.	**tungena**	
	Dat.	**tungum**	

§15. The **nominative case** in nouns in Chaucer ends in **-e**, of such nouns as in Anglo-Saxon were

(a) Of the **n-** declension, masculine, feminine, and neuter. Ex. **drope** (AS m. **dropa**), **harpe** (AS f. **hearpe**), **ere** (AS n. **ēare**).

(b) Masculine and neuter nouns of the vowel-stem declensions, which ended in AS in a final vowel. Ex. **ende** (AS m. **ende**), **spere** (AS n. **spere**).

(c) Feminine nouns of the vowel-stem declensions that ended in **-u** in the nominative, in Anglo-Saxon. Ex. **care** (AS f. **caru**), **dore** (AS f. **duru**), **lawe** (AS f. **lagu**).

(d) Monosyllabic feminine nouns with a long stem-syllable. The **-e** here in oblique cases influenced the nominative. Ex. **bote** (AS f. **bōt**), **cheste** (AS f. **cest**), **halle** (AS f. **heall**).

Certain very common words are exceptions to this. Ex. **ok, plyt, sped, thryft, wight, won, world, bench, bok, hond, might, nyght.**

(e) Nouns of the gerund form, in **-ing, -inge, -yng, -ynge.** Not the present participle.

(f) Nouns, ending in **-en** in Anglo-Saxon, apocopate to **-e.** Ex. **eve** (AS n. **ǣfen**), **game** AS n. **gamen**), **mayde** (AS n. **mægden**).

(g) Some masculine and neuter nouns end in **-e,** which in AS ended in a consonant in the nominative. Ex. **botme** (AS **botm**), **cloude** (AS **clūd**), **dethe** (AS **dēaþ**), **welkne** (**wolcen**).

(h) The "petrified" dative. Some familiar phrases, containing in AS a preposition with the dative case, remain in Chaucer. Ex. **to borwe, on horse, to bedde.**

(i) Some nouns of uncertain derivation end in **-e.** Ex. **drede** (AS verb **drǣdan**), **hye** (AS verb **hīgian**).

§16. **Nouns** which in Old French end in **-e,** retain the **-e** in Chaucer. Ex. **fortune, aventure.**

§17. **Genitive.** The genitive singular of nouns ends in **-es** in Chaucer. Certain nouns are exceptions to this rule, being usually old genitival forms. Ex. **his lady grace, his herte blood, his fader wil.**

Proper nouns in -s often have a genitive identical with the nominative. Ex. **That was the kyng Priamus sone of Troye.**

§18. **Plurals.** The plural of nouns ends regularly in **-es,** or (if the nominative ends in **-e**) in **-s.**

Words in **-aunt, -ent, -ioun, -ion, -r, -en, -on, -an,** usually take **-s, -z.** Ex. **servauntz, payementz, prisouns.**

Certain other exceptions to the **-s** plural should be noted.

(a) **asshen, ben, eyen, foon, shoon.**

(b) **brethren, doughtren, sustren, children, hosen.**

(c) **feet, men, wommen.**

(d) (Plural identical with singular) **wyntir, yer, nyght, folk, thyng.**

§19. **Genitive Plural.** Except in a few cases, as in **nonne preest,** the genitive plural is identical with the nominative. The old dative plural exists only in particles such as **whilom, a thousand sithe** (AS **sithum**), **fote** (AS **fotum**).

§20. **Adjectives.**

(a) Anglo-Saxon adjectives, ending in **-e** or **-a** in the strong form, end in **-e** in Chaucer. Ex. **blithe** (AS **blīþe**), **clene** (AS **clǣne**), **grene** (AS **grēne**); **lyte, muche,** from AS **lȳt, lȳtel, micel, mycel,** retain the **-e.**

(b) Some adjectives, probably in the petrified vocative, or in a weak use as a well-known epithet, take **-e** in Chaucer. Ex. **hye God, goode fayre Whyt, longe while** (perhaps from AS acc. of time).

(c) Some adjectives of Germanic origin other than Anglo-Saxon, take **-e.** Ex. **badde, lowe, meke, shene, wykke.**

(d) Romance adjectives preserve their **-e** in Chaucer. Ex. **huge, nice, straunge.**

(e) Some Romance adjectives get **-e** in Chaucer, perhaps from the influence of the feminine ending. Ex. **comune.**

Some Romance adjectives preserve their French endings: **o bele nece, egles tercels.**

(f) All weak or definite adjectives end in **-e.** Exceptions occur, **his good wil, the first day of the yere.**

(g) Vocative adjectives before the noun are in the weak form, with **-e. O harde grace.**

(h) Dissyllabic and trisyllabic adjectives, accented on the penult, keep or drop **-e** in the weak form, to suit the metrical needs, according to the position of the accent of the following word. Ex. **this woful day, the grettest joy, his excellent nature, the wofulleste wight.**

(i) Monosyllabic plural adjectives end in **-e.** Ex. **dede men.**

In the predicate position this **-e** is sometimes lost. Ex. **Ye be so wys.**

(j) Plural polysyllabic adjectives do not take **-e**, except rarely for metrical needs.

(k) Adjectives end as now in **-er, -est** in the comparative and superlative.

§21. **Pronouns.**

Nominative.	Possessive	Accusative.
I, y, ich, ik	**my, myn**	**me**
thou, thow	**thy, thyn**	**the, thee**
he	**his, hise**	**hym, him**
she, sche, scho	**hire, hir** (mon. syll.)	**hire, here** (mon. syll.)
it, hit	**his**	**it, hit**
we	**our, oure**	**us**
ye	**your, youre**	**yow, you**
they, thei	**hire, here**	**hem, them**
	ther, their	

Absolute or Attributive.

myn
thyn (**thow** is often attached to verbs, as **sekestow?**)
his
hires (usually monosyllabic)
hire
oures, oure
youres, youre
hires, theires

§22. Relative pronouns appear as in modern English.

(a) **Which** often appears with conjunctive **that**; **which that, the which that. Swych** appears along with **such**; pl. **aldre**, in compounds like **alderbest, alderlest, aldermost, alderbothe, men** (**me**), **noon, nought**, etc.

(b) **Al. Alle** in the singular is often found, alongside **al**; plural regularly **alle**. Genitive plural (AS **ealra**), **alder, aldre**, in compounds like **alderbest, alderlest, aldermost, alderlevest.**

(c) **Reflexive** forms in **-en** occur regularly, as **myselven, hemselven**, etc.

(d) **Demonstratives.**

that, pl. **tho.**
thilke, pl. **thilke** (**that ilke**).
this, pl. **this, thise, these** (monosyllabic).
this ilke.
that oon, that other, by corruption **the toon, the tother.**

(e) **Interrogatives.** **Who, whos, whom, ho, hos, hom, what, which** (often used for our **what**). **What** often equals **why. What shulde he fasten?**

§23. **Adverbs.**

(a) The Anglo-Saxon ending of adverbs in **-e** is preserved. Ex. **bryghte, softe.**

Ryght and **lyk,** really conjunctives, are exceptions.

(b) Adverbs end also in **-ly, -lich, -liche** (the latter endings rare before consonants). Ex. **Softeliche he cam. They ronnen hastifliche.**

(c) Adverbs are compared as in modern English. Observe the forms **bet, wors, mo, ner, more, lasse, derre, ferther, ferre, gladlyer, best, mest.**

(d) Some adverbial particles end in **-es** in Chaucer, either from the AS ending, or by analogy. Ex. **algates** (ONorse **alle gotu**), **amonges** (AS **onmang**), **ageynes** (AS **ongægnes**), **elles, ellis** (AS **elles**), **hennes** (AS **heonan, hionan**). So **ones, thennes, thries, togederes, towardes, twyes, unnethes, whennes.**

§24. **The Verb.** In Chaucer, as in Anglo-Saxon, the verbs are divided into the strong and weak conjugations. The strong verbs form the preterite and other past forms by means of ablaut, or vowel-gradation of the verb stem-vowel; the weak verbs for the past add **-de, -te,** for the past participle **-ed.**

§25. **Strong Verbs.** Including the verbs which at an earlier stage of the language employed reduplication, the strong verbs appear in seven classes; that is, the vowel-gradations in the stems appear in seven combinations.

Strong Verbs, vowel-gradation in Anglo-Saxon.

	Stem I. All forms of present.	Stem II. 1 and 3 pret. sing.	Stem III. 2 pret. sing., pret. pl. and subj.	Stem IV. Past part.
1.	ī bīdan (bide)	ā bād	i bidon	i biden
2.	ēo bēodan	ēa bēad	u budon	o boden
3.	i, e bindan	a band	u bundon	u, o bunden
4.	e, beran	æ bær	ǣ bǣron	o boren
5.	e metan	æ mæt	ǣ mǣton	e meten
6.	a faran	ō fōr	ō fōron	a faren, færen

Class seven will be considered separately.

§26. Mood and tense-endings being alike for all strong verbs, a single paradigm of Anglo-Saxon rīsan is given with the Middle English corresponding form in parenthesis.

Present		Indicative.	Subjunctive.
Sing.	1	rīse (rise)	rīse (rise)
	2	[rīsest] rīst (rist, risest)	rīse (rise)
	3	[rīseþ] rīst (rist, riseth)	rīse (rise)
Plur.	1	rīsath	rīsen (risen, -e)
	2	(riseth, risen, rise, rises)	
	3		

		Imperative.	Infinitive.	Participle.
Sing.	1		rīsan (risen)	rīsende (risyng, risynge)
	2	rīs (rise)		
	3			
Plur.	1	rīsaþ		
	2	(riseth, rise)		
	3			

Preterite		Indicative.	Subjunctive.	Past Participle.
Sing.	1	rās (roos)	rise (rise)	risen (risen)
	2	rise (rise)		
	3	rās (roos)		
Plur.	1	rison (risen)	risen (risen)	
	2			
	3			

§27. **Notes on the forms in Chaucer.**

(a) Present. The first person singular regularly ends in **-e**, but sometimes this **-e** is not sounded in the commonest verbs.

The second person singular, by syncopation, often contracts to **-st. Thow farst, thow wenst.**

The third person singular regularly ended in **-eth**, as in the paradigm. Frequently this appears as **-th** only, as in **comth, goth,** etc. Even where the full **-eth** is written, it is sometimes not sounded as a syllable. Verbs with stems ending in **-t, -d, -s,** as **riden, writen,** sometimes contract to **-t.** So **rit, stant, writ.**

The modern form (a northern dialect form in Chaucer's day) sometimes appears; **he dwelles.**

The plural ending is regularly **-en;** sometimes occur the variants **-eth, -es.**

(b) Preterite. Noteworthy is the second person singular form in **-e; rise.** The modern form in **-est** belongs generally in weak verbs after **-ed.**

§28. **List of Strong Verbs.**

Class I.

AS	ī	ā	i	i
Chaucer	i	o	i	i
	shinen	shoon	shinen	shinen

Verbs: **shyne, dryve, ryve, shryve, thryve, byte, slyte, smyte, wryte, byde, glyde, ryde, slyde, bistryde, wrythe, agryse, ryse, wrye, stryve** (added from Old French).

Class II.

AS	ēo	ēa	u	o
Chaucer	e, u	e	o	o

Verbs: **creepe, cleeve, brewe, fleete, sheete, beede, seethe, cheese, leese** (with wk. pret. **loste** also), **flye, lye, flee** (also with weak pret. **fledde**), **brouke, louke.**

Class III.

AS	i, e	a	u	u, o
Chaucer	i, e	o, a	ou, o	ou, o

Verbs: **swelle, helpe, yelpe, delve, yeelde, worthe, kerve, sterve, breste, thresshe, fighte, swimme, clymbe, biginne, blinne** (brenne), (renne), **spinne, winne, bynde, fynde, grynde, wynde, ringe, singe, springe, stinge, thringe, wringe, drinke, sinke, stinke, swinke.**

Brenne, renne are forms from Old Norse. **Brenne** is inflected in the weak conjugation.

Class IV.

AS	e	æ	ǣ	o
Chaucer	e	a	e, e	o

Verbs: **stele, bere, shere, tere, come, nime, trede, breke, speke, wreke. Come, nome** form sing. pret. in **o; com, nom.**

Class V.

AS	e	æ	ǣ	e
Chaucer	e, i	a, e	e	e, i

Verbs: **yive, weve, ete, mete, gete, quethe, see, sitte, bidde, lye** (lie down), **weve,** pp. **woven; ete,** pt. **eet;** (**quethe**), pt. **quoth, quod; see,** pt. **saugh; sy,** pp. **seyen, sene, yseene.**

Class VI.

AS	a	ō	ō	a
Chaucer	a, a, e	o	o	a, a, e, o

Verbs: **fare** (pt. **ferde** < AS **feran**), **swere** (pp. **sworen**), **shape, stape, grave, shave, heve** (pt. **haf**), **drawe, gnawe, stonde** (**stande**), (pp. **stonden**), **bake, forsake, shake, take** (from Old Norse), **wake, laughe, slee** (pt. **slough, slow**; pp. **slawen, slayn**), **waxe, wexe** (pt. **weex, wex, wax**; pp. **woxen**), **wasshe** (pt. **wessh**).

Class VII.

Verbs which in early Germanic languages, e.g., Gothic, reduplicated the stem in the preterite, are called reduplicating verbs. Ex. Gothic **haihald** (held).

AS	a (or other vowel)	e, eo	a, etc.
Chaucer	a, etc.	e,	a, etc. (same vowel as in
	falle	fell	fallen present stem).
	walke	welk	walken

Verbs: **falle, holde, wolde, walke** (also with wk. pret. **walkede**), **fonge, honge, hote, blowe, knowe, crowe, sowe, throwe, sleepe** (also wk. pret. **slepte**), **wepe** (wk. pret. also **wepte**), **lete** (pp. often **laten**), **drede, rede, lepe** (also wk. pret. **lepte**), **hewe, bete, growe.**

§29. **Weak Verbs.** Three classes of weak verbs existed in Anglo-Saxon. Note that in these the preterite plural is from the same stem as the singular.

Class I.

AS	Chaucer	AS	Chaucer
herian	herien	pret. herede	herede
dēman	demen	dēmde	demde
bycgan	byen	bohte	bouhte

	AS	Chaucer	
pp.	gehered	yhered	hered
	gedēmed	ydemed	demed
	geboht	ybouht	bouht

In **herian** the ending is **-ian.** In many Chaucerian verbs the **-i** disappears. Ex. **derian,** Ch. **dere.**

In **deman,** the **-ede** of the preterite appears as **-de.**

In **bycgan**, the stem-vowel changes. Ex. **selle, solde; telle, tolde; wirchen, worhte.** Changes also occur in **recche, strecche, teche, byen, thenken, bringe, wirchen, seche, seke.**

Class II.

AS	**lufian**	**lufode**	**gelufod**
Chaucer	**love**	**lovede**	**loved**

Class III.

AS	**libban**	**lifde**	**gelifd**
Chaucer	**live**	**livede**	**ylived, lived**

§30. Inflections of weak verb.

		AS	Ch.
Pres. Sing.	1	**dēme**	**deme**
	2	**dēmest**	**demest, demst**
	3	**dēmeþ**	**demeth**
Plur.		**dēmaþ**	**demeth, demen**

Subj. sing. **dēme**; pl. **demen.**
Imper. **deme** (AS and Ch.); pl. **demaþ**, Ch. **demeþ.**
Infinitive **dēman**, Ch. **demen.**
Participle **dēmende**, Ch. **demyng.**

		AS	Ch.
Pret. Sing.	1	**dēmde**	**demde, demede**
	2	**dēmdest**	**demdest**
	3	**dēmde**	**demde**
Plur.		**dēmdon**	**demden, demeden**

Subj. sing. **dēmde**, pl. **demden.**
(AS and Ch.)
Past participle **gedēmed**, Ch. **ydemed, demed.**

In Chaucer, usually, the syncopated forms in **-de** are preferred to the full forms in **-ede.** Ex. **felte** for **felede.** Verbs in **-ede**, as **demede, semede**, are the exception rather than the rule in the weak preterites.

§31. **Preterite-present class.** A few verbs in Anglo-Saxon, originally perfects, came to acquire a present meaning. In some cases it is easy to see how this happened, since **wāt, I know,** implies I have seen, or have learned. In the present these verbs belong to the strong conjugation, except for the

second person singular, which belongs to the singular stem, and adds **-t.** These verbs added a new weak preterite, an infinitive, present participle, and in a few verbs a strong past participle.

I Class of strong verbs. AS **wāt,** Chaucer **wot.**
III Class, AS **can, þearf, dear,** Chaucer **can, dar, thar.**
IV Class, AS **sceal,** Chaucer **shal.**
V Class, AS **mæg,** Chaucer **may.**
VI Class, AS **mōt,** Chaucer **mot.**
VII Class, AS **āg, āh,** Chaucer **owe.**

§32. The inflections of these verbs in Chaucer follows.

Inf.	Present.			
	sing. 1, 3	sing. 2	pl.	subj.
witen	**wot, woot**	**wost**	**wite, wote**	
konne	**kan**	**kanst**	**konne**	**konne**
				kan
(durre)	**dar**	**darst**	**dar**	**dare**
	thar (impers. w. acc.)			
	hym thar			
	shal	**shalt**	**shal, shul**	**shul**
mowen	**may**	**mayst**	**may, mowe**	**may, mowe**
	mot, moot	**most**	**mote, moten**	**mote**
owen	**him oweth**		**owen**	

	Preterite.			
sing. 1, 3	sing. 2	pl.	subj.	pp.
wiste	**wistest**	**wiste**	**wiste**	**wist**
koude, kowde	**koudest**	**koude**	**koude**	**kouth**
kouthe			**koude**	
dorste	**dorstest**	**dorste**		
thurfte				
sholde, shulde	**sholdest**	**sholde(n)**		
myghte	**myghtest**	**myghten**	**myghte**	
moste, must(e)		**mosten**	**most, moste**	
oghte, oughte (usually impers. with all numbers and persons)	**oughtestow**	**oughten**		**owed**

§33. Special Verbs. **Be, wil, don, gon,** and **have.**

Pres. Sing. 1	am	wil, wyl		
2	art, artow	wilt, wylt		
3	is	wil		
Pl.	be, ben	wol, wole		
Subj. Pres.	be, pl. be, ben	wol		
		wole		
Pret. Sing. 1	was	wolde		
2	were	woldest		
3	was	wolde		
Pl.	were	wolde, wolden		
Pret. Subj.	were	wolde		
		wolde, wolden		
Imperative	be			
	beth			
Pres. part.	beyng			
Past. part.	ben			
Infinitive	be, ben			
Pres. Sing. 1	do	go	have	
2	dost	goost	hast	
3	doth	goth	hath	
Pl.	don	gon	han	
Subj. Pres.	do	go	have	
	do, don	go, gon		
Pret. Sing. 1	dide, dyde dede		hadde	
2	didest, dedest		haddest	
3	dide, etc.		hadde	
Pl.	diden		hadde	
Pret. Subj.	dide, dede		hadden	
	dede, deden			
Imperative	do		have	
	doth		haveth, hath	
Pres. part.	doyng	goyng	havyng	
Past. part.	idon, ydon, don	go, goon	ihad, had	
Infinitive	do, don	gon	have, ha	

III. Notes on Special Úsages.

§34. **Nouns.** Certain expressions, which we should call adverbial, preserve old uses of the oblique cases. The genitive is found in **his thonkes** (thanks to his own efforts), the old dative form in time constructions, **his lyve** (during all his

life), and the accusative of time is more common than now; **this yere, this pestilence.**

§35. **Adjectives.** The substantival use is common; **this goodly fre** (lady understood); **chaunge for no newe; the grete** (greater part). For the usage of such forms as **oon, oonly,** see the Glossary.

§36. **Prepositions.** Many verbs in Chaucer take prepositions in uses which are now obsolete. Cf. **on reste, on eve, of a purpos.** Some prepositions, which now appear at the clause-end, follow the verb; **to hele with your hurtes.** Others sometimes follow their object; **wente hir fro.** The constructions **to wedde** (for a pledge), **to wyve,** etc., represent an old dative construction. The preposition **with** is almost imprecatory; **with sory grace!** ("bad luck to him").

§37. **Adverbs.** An important difference between Chaucer's use of adverbs and ours lies in the repetition of a negative idea for emphasis where to us it appears redundant or, according to some, contradictory.

> **He never yet no vileynye ne sayde**
> **In al his lyf, unto no maner wyght.**
> **She nas hir doghter nat.**

Conjunctions. The conjunction **as** appears in poetry in innumerable cases where it is untranslatable, with a vague enclitic and expletive force, slightly restrictive usually, meaning "considering," "that is to say."

> **And borne hym wel, as of so lytel space**
> **In hope to stonden in his lady grace.**

§38. **Pronouns.** A verb may agree with the pronoun in apposition; **hit am I.**

The greater use of the impersonal verbs causes greater use of the dative (objective) forms of the pronouns. **Wel was him, us lyketh, hem thynketh wel. What nedeth yow?** Similar constructions employed the reflexive forms frequently. **Thou** is used in familiar, hostile, or in prayerful discourse; **ye** is used for the singular second person in forms of courtesy. Where no especial person is addressed the singular may be found; **Ther maystow seen devysyng of herneys.** The distinction is clear, if we compare the respectful address of the captured Cok to the Fox, CT. B 4595 (**ye**) with his scornful words upon escape immediately thereafter

(thou, thow, thy). He sometimes appears as Lat. ille; **he Jakke Straw** ("The famous JS.").

§39. **Verbs.** The subjunctive was very common in Chaucer's day, and was used not merely for conditional clauses, but almost all other subordinate relations, as time, concession, desire, and command. **I deme anon this clerk his servaunt have.**

Intransitive verbs frequently used a perfect form with the verb **be** instead of the simple past, or the perfect with **have. This Piramus is come.** This usage is most common with verbs of motion. Compare the modern "Is he gone?"

The perfect participle in the predicate after **do, make,** is seen in such constructions as **Thise merchauntz han doon fraught hir shippis.** Compare also **He leet do make a temple.**

IV. Meter.

§40. Chaucer employed, except in a few specimens, the eight-syllable or ten-syllable iambic line. The former he employed almost exclusively in the short couplet, the latter in the heroic couplet or in ballade. Ballade, sometimes called also ballade royal or rime royal, is so named from its use in the French *balades.* These had stanzas of seven or eight lines. The rime-scheme of the former was ababbcc, of the latter ababbcbc. The typical ballade had three stanzas with common rimes and refrain and an *envoy* of five or six lines.

§41. Description of the other types of verse, since the specimens are so few, is not needed here. The reader will not fail to observe the tail-rime stanzas of *Sir Thopas,* and the fantastic strophes of the *Anelida,* as well as the *terza rima* of the *Compleint,* and the roundels of *Merciles Beaute.*

§42. The attempt has been made to consider Chaucer's line apart from the use of other poets, and to enter into much detail on the peculiar usages of his verse. When all has been said, however, it remains true that but a single form of his usage is rare among English poets. This is the nine-syllable line; **Gynglyng in a whistlyng wynde as clere.** Where, elsewhere, there appear a wrong number of syllables in the line, the reader will find that by applying the practices of other poets, or in the elision, apocope, or syncope of final weak **-e,** the apparent difficulty will disappear. Particularly at the cæsura this treatment of **-e** will dispose of most of the cases

known as the extra-syllable. Final **-e** at the end of the line, of course, counts as in Dante's verse as a feminine ending.

V. Chaucer's Life.

§43. Chaucer's life was spent in service at court. Recent study has proved that the facts we possess concerning his life—chiefly records of payment—show only that his service was faithful and well rewarded; that he rose steadily in fortune and regard; and that he died a prosperous, successful man. His career in the royal household was like that of others in similar positions. Nothing in the long list of entries in the records of his life is out of the ordinary life of the court-attendant; nor is it established that Chaucer's literary genius furthered his worldly welfare. Shakespeare's success as actor and manager, and our meager information about his literary life, are curiously paralleled by what we know of the career of our greatest English mediæval poet.

§44. **Birth and Death.** The dates of Chaucer's birth and death are uncertain. The years 1340-1344 may be given as limits for the former, however. October 25, 1400, is the traditional date of his death. The year is almost certainly correct. He was buried in Westminster Abbey; and around his tomb sprang up, long afterwards, the famous Poets' Corner.

§45. **Parentage.** John Chaucer, Geoffrey Chaucer's father, was a London wine-merchant. He owned a brew-house, shops, etc., without Aldgate. His family may have been originally of Norfolk stock. Following what seems to have been a practice of prosperous merchants, he was able to obtain for his son a position as page in a royal household. Doubtless his personal services to Edward III, of which there is some record, gained him this favor.

§46. **Early Life.** We know nothing of Chaucer's education. His name first appears May 20, 1357, in the household accounts of Elizabeth, Countess of Clarence, whose husband, Lionel, was a younger son of the king. In 1359, while in France during the invasion of that country, Chaucer was one of her household to be ransomed from captivity. Of his capture we know nothing. In 1360, still in service with the Countess or Duke Lionel, he was a bearer of messages between the young commander at Calais and his father, Edward III, in London. His further promotion was due, no doubt, to well-earned popularity. A pleasant passage in *The*

Knyghtes Tale (A 1426-40) offers an interesting parallel, all the more valuable because the source of the poem, Boccaccio's *Teseide,* contains no hint of these lines. They may well be taken as a reminiscence of Chaucer's early days at court.

> A yeer or two he was in this servyse
> Page of the chambre of Emelye the brighte;
> And Philostrate he seyde that he highte.
> But half so wel biloved a man as he
> Ne was ther nevere in court, of his degree;
> He was so gentil of condicioun
> That thurghout al the court was his renoun.
> They seyden, that it were a charitee,
> That Theseus wolde enhaunsen his degree,
> And putten hym in worshipful servyse
> Ther as he myghte his vertu exercise.
> And thus withinne a while his name is spronge
> Bothe of hise dedes and his goode tonge,
> That Theseus hath taken hym so neer
> That of his chambre he made hym a Squier,
> And gaf hym gold to mayntene his degree.

§47. **Missions in the King's Service.** In 1367, when Chaucer's name next appears, we find him newly established in the king's own household; a promotion which appears natural and not uncommon. His title was at first "vallettus," afterwards "esquier" (or in Latin "scutifer" and "armiger"). The class of squires to which Chaucer belonged can best be compared to secretaries, in our day and land. They acted for the king in the purchase of supplies, in managing the household, and in bearing messages of importance. Often during the wars they served abroad in the army. Thus in 1369 Chaucer was in France, with many others of the king's household. Other particular services, with dates, follow.

1370. Dispatches to France.

1372-1373. Secret service to Italy (Genoa and Florence), probably in connection with trade alliances.

1376. Secret service abroad, with Sir John de Burley, who had been Captain of Calais.

1377. Missions to Flanders and France, on a secret treaty with France. In these Chaucer was a subordinate, but apparently a trusted one.

1378. Missions for the young king, Richard II, who had succeeded his grandfather, Edward III, in 1377, to France and to Lombardy. The latter embassy was sent to Barnabo Visconti, Lord of Milan, for assistance in his wars.

§48. **Rewards.** The squires of the King's household received a regular wage, sevenpence halfpenny a day. In addition, however, they were given such benefits as it was in the King's power to grant, such as annuities, grants of land, grants of office, the custody of lands belonging to heirs under age, and other valuable favors. Chaucer's rewards were apparently like those of other squires, some of whom received more, some less. His rewards follow.

1367. Yearly pension of 20 marks (£13 6s. 8d.).

1374. Pitcher of wine daily, from the king.

1374. Controllership of Customs and Subsidy of Wools, skins, and leather for the Port of London. This was ended in 1386.

1375. Custody of lands and person of Edmund Staplegate, of Kent.

1376. Grant of fine paid by John Kent for smuggling.

1382. Controllership of Petty Customs, Port of London. This was ended in 1386.

1385. Justice of the Peace for Kent.

1386. Knight of the Shire for Kent, and thus a member of Parliament.

1389. Clerk of the King's Works at Westminster.

1390. Clerk of the King's Works at Windsor. These offices probably involved superintendency of repairs and alterations.

1390. Commission to repair the banks of the Thames between Woolwich and Greenwich. In this year Chaucer erected the royal scaffolds—grandstands—for a tournament in Smithfield. He was also appointed joint forester of North Petherton Park.

1394. Grant of £20 annually for life.

1398. Sole Forester of North Petherton Park.

1399. Henry IV, crowned September, 1399, granted Chaucer 40 marks (£26 13s. 4d.) annuity, in addition to the £20 annuity, which was confirmed.

All these rewards Chaucer owed, officially at least, directly to the King. His loss of the customs positions in 1386 may have been merely a resignation, and cannot be held to argue loss of fortune or royal favor. No doubt, in his twelve years of office, Chaucer's shrewdness and ability to deal with all sorts of people had brought him a considerable fortune. He must have become a landholder of some consequence in Kent to have been appointed Justice of the Peace for that shire. To the end of

his life, so far as we have any right to judge, Chaucer appears to have steadily advanced in purse and reputation; and although a few records show Chaucer borrowing money, or sued for debt, yet he was probably no more hard pressed for that commodity than the King's exchequer.

§49. **Marriage, and Life in London and Greenwich.** Squires of the royal household, as was natural, often married ladies-in-waiting. Probably before 1366, Chaucer married Philippa, generally believed to be Philippa Roet, Lady of the Chamber to Queen Philippa. She was the sister of Catherine Swynford, mistress and afterwards wife of John of Gaunt, of whose infant children she had been governess. In 1372 Philippa received a small grant from John of Gaunt, and in 1374, with her husband, a further grant of £10 yearly. In the latter grant Chaucer's services to the Duke are also referred to, but it is likely that the whole grant was intended for the service of Philippa. Chaucer had written *The Boke of the Duchesse* in 1366 as a memorial of John of Gaunt's first wife, but the poem does not appear to have brought any immediate reward; nor does the traditional theory of John of Gaunt's patronage of Chaucer have any strong foundation. Still, in 1386, the Duke was present at a ceremony in Lincoln, when Philippa was admitted as a lay-member of the Cathedral body.

Chaucer lived in 1374 in the dwelling-house above the gate of Aldgate. About 1386 he went to live in Greenwich; and shortly before the end of his life he leased a residence at Westminster.

Of his married life we know nothing; less even than of Shakespeare's. His wife died about 1387. Thomas Chaucer, whose relationship to the poet is almost beyond dispute, appears to have been the only child to gain distinction. He was chief butler to Richard II, before Geoffrey died. A "litel sone Lowis," for whom Chaucer prepared his *Astrolabe,* is not mentioned elsewhere.

Cecilia Chaumpaigne, in 1380, released Chaucer from all liability "de raptu meo." The exact nature of the charge we have no means of knowing; it is likely that it was merely a civil suit, and that Chaucer was only one of a number involved. In September, 1390, Chaucer was robbed twice, near the Foul Oak in Kent, while traveling on business of his office, and some of the King's money was taken from him.

§50. **Chaucer's Friends.** With his excellent opportunities and the amiable character which we observe in his writings, it would have been strange if Chaucer had not had a wide circle of friends. As a member of the King's household he doubtless felt it wrong to mix in the politics of the great lords, or the religious or social quarrels of his time. His associates, at any rate, are drawn from both of the chief conflicting parties. John Gower, the poet, author of *Confessio Amantis,* was an unsparing critic of Richard II and of the clergy. Chaucer dedicated his *Troilus* to him and to Ralph Strode, Fellow of Merton College, Oxford, and an opponent of Wycliffe. Chaucer also left Gower as his attorney upon his departure for France in 1378. Henry Scogan, to whom Chaucer addressed an *Envoy,* was tutor to King Henry IV's sons, and had previously been in Richard's service. Otes de Graunson, from whose French verses Chaucer translated his *Compleynt of Venus,* was a knight of Savoy in the service of John of Gaunt. Robert de Bukton, to whom (probably) Chaucer addressed an *Envoy,* was a squire of Queen Anne's household, in Richard II's court. Eustache Deschamps, a contemporary poet of France, who served, like Chaucer, at his King's court, sent to his English rival in poetry a copy of his poems, with a ballade addressed to the "Grant translateur, noble Geffroy Chaucier." Deschamps' poems had great influence upon Chaucer. Deschamps' friend, Lewis Clifford, who bore the poems to England, was an opponent of John of Gaunt, but with Lollard leanings.

Other prominent men with whom Chaucer had relations were Lord William de Beauchamp, a son of the Earl of Warwick, and Thomas de Percy, a brother of the Earl of Northumberland.

Of Chaucer's acquaintance in Italy we know nothing. He may have met Boccaccio and Petrarch, or he may not. At all events, he had time in a four-months' stay to make some Italian friendships.

VI. Dates of Chaucer's Works.

§51. None of Chaucer's writings is definitely dated. All depend upon more or less uncertain inferences from style, source, or allusions to contemporary events. It is a curious fact, that while the poet tells Scogan that while he was young, he put his pen "forth in press," yet only one poem, the *Boke of the*

Duchesse, can be dated with certainty before his thirty-fifth year, and most of his extant work lies between the years of forty-five and sixty. Much, evidently, has been lost.

1369-1370. *Boke of the Duchesse.* Blanche, Duchess of Lancaster, died in the autumn of 1369.

1377-1381. Translation of *Bocthius.*

1381. *Parlement of Foules,* celebrating the betrothal of Richard II and Anne of Bohemia, in 1381.

1380-1385. *Troilus and Criseyde.*

1386-1387. *Legend of Good Women.* Second *Prologue* (A-version) somewhat later (1394-95, according to Tatlock).

1391-1392. *Treatise on the Astrolabe.*

1387-1400. *The Canterbury Tales.* Of these the *Knightes Tale* (under the name of *Palemon and Arcite*), the *Lyf of Seynt Cecilie,* and perhaps other parts, were written earlier. The invocation in *St. Cecilie* has been placed at 1385, the rest of the *Seconde Nonnes Tale* earlier.

1396. *Lenvoy to Bukton.* If addressed to Robert Bukton, as is probable, then just at his marriage before January, 1397.

1399. *Compleynt to his Purse.* Addressed to Henry IV, as "conquerour" of England. Henry was crowned in 1399.

§52. The other works have only vague and general evidence for date. Early work probably includes *Chaucer's A B C,* a translation, *Origenes upon the Maudeleyne, Boke of the Leoun* (lost), *Compleynt of Mars,* complaints, roundels, etc. *The Hous of Fame* and *Anelida* have been placed between 1380 and 1385. Late work includes probably a translation of Pope Innocent's *De Contemptu Mundi, Fortune, Lak of Stedfastnesse, Envoy to Scogan, Compleynt of Venus* and *The Former Age.* Last of all, according to the sentimental tradition supported by early scribes, came *Trouthe,* "written on his death-bed."

VII. Chaucer's Reading.

§53. Chaucer's works present to us a writer familiar with the best reading accessible in his age. There is little phenomenal or surprising in the great number of authors cited by Chaucer, whose names and works appear in the glossarial-index. Moreover, many of the ancient writers Chaucer knew probably from the excerpts quoted in *Florilegia,* or mediæval encyclopædias. His wide acquaintance with the great French poets of his day was a natural thing, since for centuries French literature had

been a model for English poets. His admiration for Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio, however, marks the first influence of Italian literature upon our own.

§54. Two works, the *Roman de la Rose,* of the thirteenth century, and Boethius' treatise *De Consolatione Philosophiæ,* of the sixth century, had the strongest hold upon Chaucer's thought and imagination. He published translations of both, and the worldly wisdom of the one and the spiritual wisdom of the other appear upon every page of his writings.

§55. Next to these in influence come Guillaume Machault (fl. 1350), and Eustache Deschamps and Jehan Froissart, whose work was contemporary with his own. Their poems of courtly love, in the fiction of which the poet falls asleep and dreams a love-adventure, had become a definite literary type. Chaucer's own vision-poems, *The Parlement of Foules, Boke of the Duchesse, Prologue to the Legend of Good Women* and *The Hous of Fame,* were the result of his study of French models. The *Hous of Fame* was perhaps intended to serve as prologue to some collection of tales; but it was never finished.

§56. Of the Italians, Boccaccio was most influential. His *Teseide* is the source of *The Knightes Tale*; his *Filostrato* and *Filocolo* the chief sources of *Troilus and Criseyde,* though Chaucer nowhere acknowledges these debts. Boccaccio's tale of *Griselda,* translated by Petrarch from the *Decameron* into Latin, reached Chaucer in the later form. Other works by him may possibly have influenced the English poet. A sonnet of Petrarch's found its way into some stanzas of the *Troilus,* and some lines from Dante's *Divina Commedia* into the *Invocation* of the *Seconde Nonnes Tale.* It is now thought probable, also, that Chaucer's scheme of the pilgrimage with tales by the pilgrims, was the result of reading similar arrangements of tales by Italian authors, especially the *Novelle* of Giovanni Sercambi (1347-1424).

§57. Of the Latin authors of the classical age—Chaucer, like other mediæval readers, knew no Greek—our poet was acquainted with Virgil, Ovid (the chief source of the *Legend of Good Women*), Livy, Lucan, Claudian, and Maximian. The mediæval encyclopædists, and especially the writers in Latin of the twelfth to fourteenth centuries, furnished him with most of his varied knowledge of medicine, alchemy, precious stones, astronomy, history, biography, morals and religion. *The Tale of the Man of Lawe, Melibee* and the *Persones Tale* were versions of narra-

tives from Latin sources. The Church Fathers, especially Augustine and Jerome, were part of the reading of good Christians.

§58. French fabliaux furnished Chaucer with the plots of the tales of the *Miller, Reeve, Shipman, Pardoner, Wife of Bath, Summoner, Merchant* and *Manciple.* A Breton lay, in a French form, may have suggested the *Frankeleyns Tale;* and the *Nonne Preestes Tale* of the Cock and Fox was a chapter of the bourgeois mock-heroic epic, *Le Roman de Renart.*

Chaucer's achievement, however, lay not in the introduction of foreign matter and manner into English literature, nor in the number and variety of the books he read, but in his perfect assimilation of their thought, and in the wholly original impress with which every line of his poems is stamped.

VIII. The Human Comedy of the Canterbury Tales.

§59. On the sixteenth of April, 13—, Chaucer and the other twenty-eight pilgrims gathered at the Tabard Inn in Southwark. The next morning they agreed to the Host's proposal of two tales by each pilgrim, both on the outward and the homeward way, the winner to have a dinner as a prize—the best prize of which Mine Host Harry Bailey could dream. At St. Thomas a Waterings the cuts were drawn, and the lot fell upon the knight—not by accident, if we know the admirable Host aright. Precedence at the high table in his inn had taught him somewhat.

At the conclusion of the Knight's tale, Mine Host proceeded as courtesy asked, to invite the Monk to tell his tale. But the rules of courtesy, it seemed, must be laid aside. Drunken Robin, the Miller, has a tale of a carpenter to say, which vexes a little good Oswald the Reeve, and just by Deptford and Greenwich he retorts with the most famous tale of a miller that ever was known. Hodge of Ware, the London Cook, thought so at least, and with a threat of a tale of a landlord ere the pilgrimage were done, began a tale of an apprentice of London. This Chaucer never finished; and so ends all that was planned of the first day's stories (Group A).

About ten o'clock, after leaving Dartford, Mine Host called upon the Man of Lawe. He responded nobly; and the Host would have followed up the godly story with something more of the serious, had not the Parson objected so strenuously to the profanity of landlord Harry. The Shipman rudely broke

in with a ribald narrative, which greatly delighted master Bailey. Nevertheless, pursuing his rule of inviting the better class first, he called upon Madame Eglantine the Prioresse. So sober was her tale, that Mine Host, in desperation to relieve the tension, sought out Chaucer, who had been a source of considerable speculation to the worthy student of mankind at inns. A poet came his way but seldom. Alas! the poet played him a scurvy trick with his ryme of Sir Thopas; and Mine Host got such relief that his ears ached. In revenge for being stopped, Chaucer next told a long tale in prose about patience, to the great edification of all. Mine Host wishes his wife might have heard it, for patience had never been her chief virtue. Now all was clear, and with the inevitability which comes to those who deal with ranks and classes, the Host succeeded, as they came in sight of Rochester, in getting Sir Piers the Monk to tell his melancholy long list of "tragedies." At last the pilgrims murmured, and the Knight, speaking for all, ventured to interrupt the Monk. Greatly relieved at this outcome, and grateful that the interruption of a gentle had not been forced upon him, Mine Host turned, after the Monk's rebuff, to Sir John, the Nuns' Priest, and won the crown of the Tales, that of the Cock and Fox. Thus, scarcely outside Rochester, ended the second day (Group B).

Next day, between Rochester and Sittingbourne, came the Physician with his sad story of Virginia, which almost broke Harry Bailey's heart. The jolly Pardoner rescued him with his bold and shameless self-revelation, and, indeed, so deeply impressed the Host a little later with his magnificent sermon against avarice, that for a moment the Pardoner really thought his confession had been forgotten. But Mine Host was not to be caught, and took refuge in abuse. Shortly afterwards, for they were still far from Sittingbourne, the Wife of Bath, Dame Alice, began the immortal discussion of the married state with her statement of her creed. Virginity for others, not for her. She will have a husband, and sovereignty as well. Friar Hubert, who had been somewhat ill at ease under the preachments of one whose sex had furnished the bulk of his own congregations, interrupted once during her recital, and again after her Tale, to the great disgust of the Summoner, his rival in ecclesiastical rascality. High words ensued, and it was not to be wondered at that their tales should have been virulent attacks upon each other, and furnished a highly comic interlude to the rest (Groups C-D).

After luncheon at Sittingbourne, we may imagine the Host turning once more to his beloved gentles for a story-teller. He fixed upon the Clerk of Oxford, who had in silence been ruminating upon the sermon and creed of Dame Alice of Bath. His tale of Griselda, though the point was not at first apparent, was his own grave and yet mocking answer to the philosophy of the Wife. Griselda's patience, however, touched by contrast a very sore spot in the breast of the Merchant, and the Host begged him to continue the discussion. This he did, in the utter discredit and slander of the fair sex. In their defence, Mine Host next called upon the Squire to speak of love, which as yet had scarcely been mentioned. This point Chaucer himself did not finish, for the Squire's tale is left half-told. The Franklin, however, was greatly pleased with the nobility of the young Squire, being all the more reminded of it by the want of gentlemanly breeding in his own son. Upon Mine Host's urging, he concludes the discussion of marriage by a tale in which both love and marriage are exalted, but honour more than all, a most worthy conclusion. Thus the pilgrims reach Ospringe, upon the end of their third day (Groups E-F).

On the fourth day, the Second Nun tells her tale of St. Cecilia, and the pilgrims are overtaken at Boughton by the alchemy-mad Canon and his Yeoman. The Host, ever curious as to the humours of mankind, engages the Yeoman in conversation, and learns more than the Canon cares to have known about his practices. The Canon flees away for very shame, and as they pass Blean Forest the Yeoman tells a tale of trickery in transmutation. Not long afterwards, they come in sight of Bob-up-and-down, or Harbledown, only a couple of miles out of Canterbury, and the drunken Cook falls off his horse. The Manciple mocks him, but retracts upon second thought, and placates the Cook with wine from his own gourd. His Tale of a tattling crow brings the pilgrims into Canterbury, and at its close Mine Host calls upon the Parson to wind all up with a godly discourse. With the Host's excellent injunction to be "fructuous, and that in lytel space," he begins his discourse upon Penitence, and the Comedy of the leisurely Canterbury Pilgrims comes to an end (Groups G-I).

Note.—The above summary gives a more complete unity to the groups of extant Tales than perhaps ever really existed. In the *Prologue,* the reader will observe Chaucer planned for two tales each way by each pilgrim, but less than one-fifth were

provided, and the connecting "links" leave nine separate groups of Tales (Groups A-I), the exact order of which is still a disputed matter. The order of the Ellesmere MS., for example, is held by Koch to be best. It arranges the Groups thus: A, B (through *Man of Lawe*), D, E, F, C, (rest of) B, G, H, I.

GLOSSARY

GLOSSARY

Names, and in some cases notes on special words, are included in the following pages. Such etymologies as are needed for proper understanding of the Middle English forms are also included; but the etymologies are not intended to be complete guides to the early history of words, where the development of the form may be easily guessed.

The student should remember the frequent interchange of "a" and "aa," "i" and "y," "e" and "ee," "o" and "oo" in referring to words.

References to the selections are designated as follows: in the order printed,

A, B, C, etc., to I,	refer to the groups of the Canterbury Tales
Pi	Compleint unto Pite
Du	Book of the Duchesse
Cm	Compleint of Mars
Pf	Parlement of Foules
L	Legend of Good Women
CL	Compleynt to his Lady
An	Anelida and Arcite
Ad	Adam Scrivener
Fa	Former Age
Fo	Fortune
MB	Merciless Beaute
Ro	To Rosemounde
Tr	Truth
Gent	Gentilesse
LS	Lak of Stedfastnesse
Sc	Envoy to Scogan
Bu	Envoy to Bukton
CV	Compleint of Venus
P	To his Purse
Pr	Proverbs
AgW	Against Women Inconstant
Wn	Wommanly Noblesse
As	Astrolabe

The following are the chief abbreviations used:

a	adjective	refl	reflexive
acc	accusative	s	singular
ad	adverb	saec	century
art	article	sb	substantive
c	*circa*, about (dates)	Sk	according to W. W. Skeat
cf.	compare	subj	subject
conj	conjunction	suff	suffix
d	died	vb	verb, verbal
dat	dative	<	derived from
f	feminine	1, 2, 3	first, second and third person
gen	genitive		
imp	imperative	AF	Anglo-French
impers	impersonal	Arab	Arabic
inf	infinitive	AS	Anglo-Saxon
interj	interjection	Dan	Danish
m	masculine	Du	Dutch
n	neuter	F	French
p	present participle	Gael	Gaelic
pers	personal	Ger	German
pers	personification	Gr	Greek
pl	plural	Icel	Icelandic
poss	possessive	Lat	Latin
pp	past participle	L Ger	Low German
pr	present	ME	Middle English
prep	preposition	OF	Old French
pron	pronoun	ON	Old Norse
pt	past tense	Sw	Swedish
qv	which see		

A

a an art. a AS ān (n before cons. dropped after 1200)

a inf. have (through slurring) ME haven, han

a interj. ah! Oh! ME, OF a.

a prep. in, on, for; a certain years] for a space of years; a twenty winter] twenty years; a Goddes half] for God's sake; a wordes few] in few words; a three] in three; a-nyght] at night; a-morwe] on the morrow; AS on

abak: backwards AS onbæc

abashat, abasshed pp. abashed, disconcerted OF esbaïr, pres. stem esbaïss-

abawed pp. disconcerted OF abaubir "stammer," influenced by esbahir

abayst pp. abashed, disconcerted; cf. **abashat.**

abbesse: abbess F abbesse

abedde: abed AS on bedde

a-begged: a-beggng ME a(on) + beggeth, analogy with AS huntaŏ "hunting"

abeye inf. pay for AS ābycgan

abhomynable: horrible, vile OF abominable

abhomynacions: abominations OF.

abilite: ability OF.

abode, pt. s. expected; cf. **abyde**

abood sb. delay vb. sb. from pt. of AS ābīdan

aboughte 3 pt. s. bought, atoned for; **abought**, pp.; **aboght** pp.; cf. **abye**

about prep. about; **aboute**

aboute ad. around AS ābūtan

aboven: above AS ābufan

Abraham: Hebrew patriarch; cf. Genesis

a-brayede pt. s. awoke AS ābregdan

abregge inf. abridge OF abregier, abrevier

abroche inf. broach, open (a cask) ME on + OF broche "spigot"

abrood: wide open ME on + AS brād, ME brod

Absalon: Absalom, son of David, famous for beauty

absolucioun: absolution OF.

abusioun: illusion OF.

abyden inf. wait for; **abyd** imp. AS ābīdan

abyen inf. pay for, suffer, atone for, abide AS ābycgan

abyte: habit, dress OF habit

a-caterwawed: caterwauling; cf. **a-begged** ME on + cat + wawe "wail"

accident: the outward appearance or phenomenon of a thing, as opposed to the thing (substance) itself, in allusion to the dispute between Realists and Nominalists (Sk.) C 539; unusual appearance, E 607; OF.

accomplice inf. accomplish OF accomplir, pr. part. accompliss-

accord sb. agreement, decision OF acorde

accordant: suitable OF.

accorde 3 pr. pl. agree OF acorder

achaat sb. buying OF.

achatours: purchasing agents OF achateor, achetour

Acheloys gen. Achelous, river-god, took form of a bull in wrestling with Hercules

Achetofel: Ahithophel, adviser of David, and afterward adviser of Absalom against David; cf. 2 Samuel xvii. Dryden uses the form Achitophel in his Absalom and Achitophel

Achilles: the greatest warrior among the Greeks at Troy. To avenge the death of his friend Patroclus he slew Hector and dragged his body thrice around the walls of Troy. Later he was lured to the temple of Apollo in Troy by the promise of marriage to Polyxena, daughter of Priam, and was there attacked by Paris and a band of men and slain, together with his friend Archilochus. This story of his death comes from Benoit de Sainte-Maure and Guido delle Colonne

acloyith: cloys, loads up OF encloyer

a-compas: in a circle ME on + F compas

acordaunt a. in accord with; acordaunt to resoun] reasonable, proper OF.

acorde sb. accord; al of oon acorde] in harmony OF.

acorden 3 pr. pl. agree; **acorded** 3 pt. s. was fitting; **acordeden** 3 pt. pl.; **acorded** pp. OF acorder

acounte: take count of OF aconter

acquite inf. acquit oneself; **acquiteth** 2 pl. imp. OF aquiter

actes pl. deeds OF acte

acusour: informer OF acuseor

acustumaunce: habit OF acoustumance

adamant: ădamant, fabulous material of extreme strength; **adamauntis** pl. magnets OF.

Adoon: Adonis, Grecian youth beloved by Venus A 2224

adoun: down, downwards; **adoune**: AS of + dūne dat. dūn "hill, down"

adrad pp. afraid, fearful AS ofdrǣdan

Adriane: Ariadne, beloved of Theseus and Bacchus

Adromacha: Andromache, wife of Hector

adversarie: adversary Lat adversārius F adversaire

adversitee, adversyte: misfortune, adversity OF.

advertence: attention OF.

advocat: advocate; **advocatz** pl. (the *t* is mute) OF avocat

a-fer: afar ME on + fer

aferd, afered, aferid pp. afraid AS āfǣran

affeccioun of hoolynesse: love for a divine nature OF affection

affermeth 3 pr. s. affirms; **affermed** pp. OF afermer

affile inf. smooth OF afiler

affray, afraye sb. fright, terror OF esfrei

affrayed pp. frightened OF esfreier

Affrik: Africa

Affrikan, Affrycan: cf. Scipioun

afounde: founder, sink OF afonder

afraye sb. dread; cf. **affray**

afright pp. frightened AS āfyrht

after prep. to get, for, according to; after oon] alike, equal AS æfter

aftir: cf. after

aftyr as: according as

agame: in sport ME on + game

agaste 3 pt. s. refl. was aghast; **agaste, agast** pp. frightened AS āgǣstan

Agaton: Agatho, perhaps an Athenian poet mentioned by Aristotle as author of play called "The Flower" (Cary and Skeat)

agayn, agaynes, agayns ad. again; prep. against, towards, to meet AS ongegn, ongéanes

agaynward: back again

agen: again

Agenores poss. Agenor's daughter, Europa, was carried off by Jupiter, who had taken the form of a bull

ageyn: again, in reply

ageynist: against, before

agiltyn inf. commit wrong; **agilte** 3 pt. pl. were at fault AS āgiltan

ago, agon, agoo, agoon pp. gone AS āgān "pass away"

a-gref ad. ill ME on + OF grief

agreved pp. angry OF agrever

agrief: in ill humor

agryse inf. dread, tremble with fear; agryse of] shudder at C 280; AS āgrīsan

agu: ague OF ague f. of agu

aiel: grandfather OF aiol, aiuel

ake inf. ache; **aken** 3 pr. pl. AS acan

aketoun: short stuffed jacket OF aketon

al a. all; al a] the whole of; al and sum] the whole; **al** ad. all, completely; **al be, al** conj. although; **al redy**: all ready AS eal pl. ealle

al sb. awl, prick AS æl

al outerly: utterly

alabastre: alabaster OF.

alauntz pl. wolf(?)-hounds OF alan, alant

alayes: alloy OF alei

Alcebiades: Alcibiades, Athenian commander in the Peloponnesian war, famous for his beauty and grace

Alceste: queen of Admetus, king of Thessaly, went to Hades as a substitute for her husband

Alcipyades: cf. Alcebiades

Alcyone: Alcyone, or Halcyone, who for grief at the death of her husband, Ceyx, threw herself into the sea. The gods in pity changed them to birds, kingfishers

alday: continually, all day

alder poss. pl. of all; our alder] of us all AS ealre

alderbeste ad. best of all

alderfayrest: the very fairest

alderfirst: first of all

alderman sb. head of a guild AS ealdorman

Aldiran: Aldiran, a star in Leo

aldirnex: next of all

ale-stake: stake from which hung branch of ivy, etc., the "bush," as sign of an ale-house AS ealu n. + staca m.

aleye: alley OF alee

Aleyn: Alain de l'Isle, saec. xii, wrote "De Planctu Naturæ," a treatise in prose and verse, and "Anticlaudianus," defending celibacy

Algarsyf: son of Cambynskan

algate, algates, algatis ad. in every way, always, at least, nevertheless, anyhow, no matter how, at any rate ON alla gotu ad. acc.

Algezir: city in Granada, captured from the Moors in 1344

alighte 3 pt. s. dismounted, camped; **alight** pp. AS ālīhtan "remove load from"

Alisaundre: Alexandria in Egypt was captured by the King of Cyprus in 1365

Alisaundre, Alysaunder: Alexander the Great

Alisoun: friend of Dame Alice, the Wife of Bath

Alkaron: Al-Koran, the Moslem Bible

all: although

Alla, Alle, Aella: king of Northumberland, 560-567 A. D.

allas interj. alas! OF.

alle pl. **al**: all; alle and some] one and all

allegge inf. allege, put forth as evidence OF esligier "free of legal difficulties"

aller poss. pl. of all; at oure aller cost] at the expense of all of us

alliaunce: alliance OF.

allon, allone: alone ME al + on < AS ān, (?)āna

allowethe for **allow the** 1 pr. s. I commend thee OF alouer

allye, allyee sb. ally; **allyes** pl. family connections OF alier "bind"

allyen, allie inf. ally oneself, join with; **allyed** pp. OF alier

Alma redemptoris: the first words of several Latin hymns: alma redemptoris mater, benign mother of the Redeemer

Almache: Almachius, "prefect" of Rome

Almageste: the greatest astronomical work of Ptolemy (*c.* 150 A. D.) < Arab al (the) + mejisti < Gr megistê, greatest

almesse: alms AS ælmysse

almest: almost AS eal + mæst

almoost ad. almost

almusdede: the giving of alms AS ælmysse + dæd f.

Alnath: a fixed star in Aries, name of the moon's first mansion

Alocen: Alhazen *c.* 1000, an Arabian astronomer

alofte: aloft ON ā lopt

als: as AS eal swā

also: as; often used to introduce a wish AS eal swā

altercacioun: dispute OF.

althou: although; cf. **althogh**

alther-first: first of all; cf. **alderfirst**

althogh, althou, althow: although ME al + AS þēah

alway, alwey: always, continually; AS ealne weg ad. acc.

alyche: alike AS onlīc a.

alyght pp. alighted, arrived; cf. **alight**

alyve: alive AS on lyfe dat.
Amadrides: Hamadryades, wood-nymphs
Amazones: Amazons, nation of women
ambes as: double aces, lowest throw in dice OF.
ambil sb. amble, gentle pace OF ambler
amblere sb. ambling horse
amblyng: ambling, pacing gently
amenden inf. better, improve; **amended** 3 pt. s.; **amendid** pp. OF amender
ameved 3 pt. s. changed, altered OF esmovoir
amonge, amonges ad. all the while; **among** prep. AS onmang
amor vincit omnia: Love conquers all things
amorouse: amorous, loving OF amoros
a-morwe: on the morrow
amounteth 3 pr. s. means, amounts to OF amonter
Amphiorax: Amphiaraus, one of the Seven against Thebes, betrayed by Eriphyle, his wife, for a necklace
Amphioun: Amphion, king of Thebes, the music of whose lyre caused stones to form themselves into the walls of Thebes
amy: friend OF.
amyable: amiable OF.
amydde, amyddes, amyddis: amid, amidst AS on middan (dat. f. + -es ad. suff.)
amys: amiss, wrong ON á mis(?) AS missan
an: cf. **a**
an prep. on AS on
ancre: anchor AS ancor
and conj. and; and if] used with conditional force; used as a relative B 622 AS and
Anelyda: queen of "Ermonye," Armenia
angle: four houses, or divisions of zodiacal circle, were called angles, N. E. S. and West; angle meridional] tenth mansion of the heavens (Sk.) OF.
anglehoke: fish-hook, angle + AS hōc m.
anglis: angles
angre: anger, trouble ON angr
angwissh: anguish OF anguisse
anhange: hang ME on + AS hōn (pp. hangen)
anlaas: knife, dagger ME on + OF laz "hanging on cord"
annexe: annex; **annexed** pp. bound to OF annexer
annunciat pp. told of by annunciation Lat. annunciatus
anon, anone, anoon ad. right away, soon; anon ryght] at once AS on ān "in one (moment)"
anoy: trouble OF anoi
anoyeth 3 pr. s. turns out ill; **annoy ye** imp. pl OF anoier
answere sb. answer, reply AS and swarn f.
answere inf. answer; **answerde, answered** 3 pt. s. AS andswarion
antheme: anthem AS antefen < antiphona
Anthenor: Antenor, according to Guido's Historia Troiana, betrayed Troy by sending the sacred Palladium to Ulysses
Antheus, Antaeus: a giant, strengthened by every contact with earth, slain by Hercules, who held him over his head B 3298
anthiphoner: antiphonea, hymn-book
Antiochus, Anthiochus: Antiochus, the great king of Syria, character in "Apollonius"
Antonius: Mark Antony
Antylegyus: Archilochus, slain with Achilles, q. v.
anvelet: anvil AS anfilte, anfælt f.
anyght: at night
apalled pp. weakened, pallid OF apallir
apayd pp. paid, repaid, satisfied OF paier
ape sb. ape, dupe AS apa m.
Apelles; cf. **Appelles**
Apennyn: The Apennines
aperceyve inf. perceive OF apercevoir
aperceyvynges: perceptions

apere inf. appear OF aparoir pres. stem aper

apert: openly

apertenaunt, apertenent, apertinent: belonging to OF apartenant

apertenyng: belonging to

apese inf. appease, allay; **apeseth** imp. pl OF apaisier

apeyren inf. injure OF empeirier

apiked pp. trimmed, adorned OF a + piquer

Apius: Appius Claudius, a Roman judge

apostles poss. pl. apostles'

apothecarie: apothecary OF apotecaire

apparaille sb. and inf. apparel OF aparailler

apparaillynge: preparation

apparence: appearance, illusion OF.

appeere, apperen inf. appear OF aparoir

Appelles: Apelles, Grecian painter of Alexander's time

appetit: appetite OF.

appreved pp. approved, true OF aprover

Apprile, Aprill, Aprille: April

approcheth 3 pr. s. approacheth OF aprochier

apresse: oppress, blame; cf. oppresse

aproprid pp. appropriated, inherent in OF aproprier

aprovede pp. approved; cf. appreved

aqueynt inf. refl. make myself acquainted OF acointer

aqueyntaunce: acquaintance OF acointance

Arabe, Arabye: Arabia

Arabyen: Arabian OF.

arace inf. tear away, root out OF arachier

aray: array, apparition OF arai

archeer: archer OF archier

archiwyves: wives who rule AS arce + wif

Arcita, Arcite, Arcyte: Theban noble, cousin of Palamon in the Knight's Tale

arede inf. interpret AS ārǣdan

areest, areste: seizure, counsel, deliberation; cf. **arreeste**. OF areste

areste inf. stop, halt OF arester

arette imp. pl. impute; **aretted** pp. OF areter

arewe: in a row AS on + rāw, rǣw f.

argued 3 pt. s. argued; **arguynge** p. OF arguer

argumenten 3 pr. pl. argue OF.

argumentis: argumẽnts

argumentz: argument, angle, arc, etc., from which another quanity may be deduced

Argus: the hundred-eyed guardian, set by Juno to guard Io, slain by Mercury. He is confused (Du 435) with Algus, or Abu Ja'far Mohamed Ben Musa, whose work on algebra introduced Arabic numerals into Europe

arist 3 pr. s. arises; **aros** 3 pt. s. arose; **arys** imp. AS ārīsan

Aristoclides: a Greek tyrant

Aristotle: the great Athenian philosopher and rhetorician

arive: disembarkation of troops for assault OF.

ark: arc, entent along rim horizon AS arc, arce

armen inf. arm; **armeth** imp. pl.; **armed** pp. OF armer

armes, armys pl. arms, coat-of-arms AS earm m.

arm-greet: as large as your arm

armlees: armless

armonye: harmony OF harmonie

Armorik: Armorica, Latin name for Brittany

armoure: armor OF armure

armurers: armorers OF armurier

armynge sb. arming

armypotente: powerful in arms Lat armipotens

arn 3 pr. pl. are

arowe, arwes pl. arrow AS ar(e)we f.

arowe ad. in a row; cf. **arewe**

Arpies: Harpies, birds with female heads, mentioned in Virgil

arrayed pp. equipped, prepared OF araier

arreeste: arrest, confinement OF areste

arrerage: arrears OF ariere + age

arrest: the rest, or lance support; in arrest] into position OF arest

Arrius: friend of Latumius (Paletinus), two characters in Gesta Romanorum

ars-metrik: arithmetic Lat ars metrica

Arthemesie: Artemisia, wife of Mausolus, erected the mausoleum for his sepulchre

Arthour: Arthur, king of Britain

artificial day: "day," in which sun is above horizon

artow: art thou

Artoys: a province of France

art, arte: art, science; pers. Artificiality; specifically, Ovid's "Ars Amatoria," A 476

arwes: cf. arowe

aryht, aryght: aright ME on + right

aryve inf. come to land OF ariver

as: as if; used as expletive, with little meaning, slightly restrictive AS eal swā

as: ace OF as

asay: trial OF essai ob asaier

asaye: try; cf. assaye OF asaier

asayle inf. assail; cf. assaille OF assaillir

ascencioun of the equynoxial: ascension of the equinoctial, fifteen degrees, or one hour OF ascencion

ascendent: ascendant, point of ecliptic rising above horizon at given moment OF.

ascendynge: in the ascendant; cf. ascendent

ascuse: excuse OF escuse

asken inf. ask; **aske** 2 and 3 pr. s. subj. AS āscian, ācsian

asking s. question

aslaked pp. assuaged AS āslacian

aslepe: asleep ME on + slep dat.

asonder a. asunder, apart AS onsundran

asp: aspen, poplar; **aspe** AS æsp, æspe f.

aspect: astrological situation; the relation between two planets OF aspect

aspre: fierce OF.

aspye: spy, see OF espier

assaille, asayle inf. assail; **assailled** pp. OF assailler

assaut sb. assault OF assaut

assay sb. test, trial OF assai

assay inf. try, test; **assayed** pp. OF assier

asse: ass AS assa m.

asseged pp. besieged OF asegier

assemblen inf. assemble; **assemblede** pp. OF asembler

assente inf. agree to, consent; **assentid** pp. OF assentir

asseureth 3 pr. s. assures OF aseürer

assh: ash tree AS æsc m. (i-stem)

asshen sb. pl. ashes AS asce f.

asshen a. ashen, pale

asshy: strewn with ashes

assise: assize OF assise "sitting"

assoille: absolve OF assoile pr. s. subj. of assoudre

assoillyng sb. absolution

asterte inf. escape, burst out; 3 pt. s. subj. might escape; **asterted** 3 pt. s.; **astert** pp. ME asterten; cf. AS sturtan

astonyed 3 pt. s. astonished **astoned, astonied, astonyd** pp. OF estoner

astored pp. provided OF estorer

astrelabie: astrolabe, instrument for obtaining altitude of planets and stars Lat astrolabium

astrologien: astrologer, astronomer OF.

astronomye: really astrology, the science of the application of astronomy to human uses through prediction or through the supposed influence of the planets over the lives of men OF astronomie

asure: azure, blue OF azur

aswage: assuage, lessen OF asuagier

aswow, aswowne: in a swoon on + AS swōgen (geswōgen "senseless")

asyde: aside ME on + AS sīde f.

Asye: Asia, or Asia Minor OF Asie

at: at, through, of; at all] in every respect; at our large] free AS æt

atake inf. overtake ME a + take

Atazir: influence Arab al-tazir

atempry: temperate OF atempre

ateyn inf. attain, discover OF ateindre, pr. stem ateign

Athalante: Atalante, a nymph, a keen, swift huntress, beloved by Hippomenes, and beaten by him in a race through his dropping of golden apples; she took part with Meleager in the Calydonian boar-hunt

Athalus: Attalus, reputed inventor of chess

aton ad. at one] into reconciliation

atones, attones ad. at one time, at once ME at + AS ōnes

atrede inf. surpass in judgment ME at + rede AS rædan

atrenne inf. surpass in running at + AS rinnan

att oo worde: in a word

attamed pp. brought on OF atamer

atte: at the; atte beste] in the best way; atte fulle] fully

attemperaunce: self-control OF atemprance

attempre, attempree: temperate, tempered, mild OF atempre

attendance: attentive service OF.

Attenes: Athens

atteyne inf. attain; cf. **ateyn**

Atthalante, *Athalante

atthamaunt: adamant, q. v.

Atthenes: Athens

Attheon: Actæon, a Grecian youth, accidentally saw Diana bathing, whereupon he was turned into a stag and devoured by his own dogs

Attilla: Attila, "the scourge of God," is said to have burst a blood-vessel

attones: at one time; cf. **atones**

atweyne: in two ME on + tweyne q. v.

atwo: in two ME on, a + two q. v.

atyr: attire OF atire

auctoritee, autorite: authority, authoritative statement OF autorite

auctour, autourys pl. author; in B 4172 the reference is to Cicero, author of De Divinatione OF autor, auctour

audience: hearing OF.

auditour: auditor OF.

aught ad. at all AS āwiht

aught, ought: ought, owed AS āhte

auncestre: ancestor OF ancestre

aungel: angel AS ængel, engel, OF angele

aungellyche: like an angel

aunte: aunt OF aunte

auntrous: adventurous OF aventuros

Aurelian: Roman Emperor d. 275

Aurelius: a Breton squire

Aurora: the title of a Latin metrical version of the Bible by Petrus de Riga, in the twelfth century

Austyn: St. Augustine of Hippo, author of the rules governing the Augustinian canons

autentyke a. authentic OF autentique

auter: altar OF auter AS altar

autorite: authority; **autoritеis** pl. cf. **auctoritee** OF autorite

autourys: authors; cf. **auctour**

availe, availle inf. avail, aid, be of value; **availeth** 3 pr. s.; **avayle** 3 pr. pl OF a + valoir, pres. stem vail

avalen inf. take down, cast down OF avaler

avantage: advantage; doon his avantage] employ his opportunity OF.

avante, avaunte 1 pr. s. boast OF avanter

avaunce inf. advance, aid OF avancer

avaunt sb. boast, claim OF avaunt

avauntage: advantage OF.

avaunte 1 pr. s. refl. boast OF.

avauntour: boaster OF.

avauntyng sb. boasting
Ave Marie: Ave Maria, Hail Mary
aventaille: the lower part of the helmet OF esventail
aventure: hap, fortune, chance OF.
Arveragus: a Breton knight < Celt name
Averill: April OF Avril
Averrois: Averroes, Moorish scholar and physician of twelfth century
avise, avyse 1 pr. s. refl. reflect OF aviser
avision: vision, dream OF.
avouterye: adultery OF avoutrie
avow sb. vow OF avoue
avowe inf. avow; **avowyth** 3 pr. s. vows OF avouer
Avoy! fie! OF avoy
Avycen: Avicenna, Ibn Sina, Arabian physician of the eleventh century, called the "Prince of Physicians"
avys: advice, discussion, opinion OF avis
avyse inf. take counsel with (refl.), consider, ponder; **avyseth** 2 imp. deliberate OF aviser
avysely: advisedly
avysement: consideration OF.
awake imp. s. awaken; **awaketh** imp. pl.; **awaked, awooke** 1 pt. s. AS āwacnan int. (weak) onwæcnan (strong)
awapid, awhaaped pp. amazed ME a + whape; cf. whap to strike
awayt sb. watch, surveillance OF awaitier
awaytinges: services
awerke: at work ME on werke, petrified dat.
aweye: gone, absent AS on weg, āweg
aweyward: away, backwards
awhaaped pp. amazed, dumbfounded; cf. awaped
awreke inf. avenge; **awreke** pp. AS on + wrecan
ax sb. axe AS æx, eax f.
axen inf. ask, seek, incur; **axe** 1 pr. s.; **axed** 3 pt. s.; **axsede** 3 pt. pl. AS acsian
axyng sb. request, question
ay ad. aye, always, ever AS ā, Icel ei
ayen, ayeyn: again; cf. ageyn
ayen, ayenst, . ayeyns: opposite, against
ayleth 2, 3 pr. s. ails AS eglan
ayre: air OF air

B

ba: caress, kiss OF baër "to open the mouth"
baar, bar 3 pt. s. bore; cf. bere
Babilon a. Babylonian
Babiloigne, Babyloyne: Babylon
bacheler: youth, candidate for knighthood OF.
bachelrye: young men OF bachelerie
bacoun: bacon OF bacon
Bacus: Bacchus, god of wine
bacyns: basins OF bacin
bad 3 pt. s. bade; cf. bidde
bade 1 pt. s. bidde
badde a. bad (orig. unkn.)
badder: worse
baggepipe: bagpipe Icel baggi
bagges: bags Icel baggi
baggeth 3 pr. s. looks askance
baillif sb. bailiff, steward or overseer OF.
baiteth 3 pr. s. baits, pastures; cf. bayte
bak, bake, bakke sb. back AS bæc n.
bake pp. baked AS bacan
balade: a poem of three stanzas with "envoy"; the meter found in such a poem riming abab bcc
balaunce s. balance; in balaunce] in suspense OF.
Baldeswelle: Bawdeswell
bale: ill, sorrow; for bote ne bale] for good nor for ill AS balu, bealu n.
balke: beam AS balca "a heap," "ridge"
balled a. bald Gael bal "spot"
bane: death, destruction AS bana m. "slayer"
baner: banner, the signal for the muster of troops OF banere
banysshed pp. banished OF banir
Barbarye: heathendom

barbour: barber, who often acted as surgeon OF barbeor

barbre: barbarian ME barbare < Lat barbarus

barel: barrel; barel ale] barrel of ale OF baril

baren 3 pt. pl. refl. behaved; cf. **bere**

bareyne: barren OF baraine

bargaynes sb. pl. bargains OF bargaigne

barly: barley AS bærlic

barm: bosom; **barme** dat. AS bearm m.

Barnabo Viscounte: Bernabo Visconti, duke of Milan, died 1385

baronage: assembly of barons, the nobility OF.

barre: bar; **barres**: metal ornaments on a girdle OF.

bataille, batayle sb. battle OF.

batailled a. embattled, like a battlement

bateth 3 pr. s. baits; cf. **bayte**

Bathe: Bath, in Somerset, England

bauderie: gaiety; cf. OF bauderie "boldness"

baudes: bawds ME bawdstrot < OF baldestrot

baudy: dirty

bawdryk: baldric or belt worn over one shoulder OF baldric, baldrei

bayte inf. bait, feed; **baiteth** 3 pr. s.; **bateth** ON beita "to make bite"

be 3 pr. s. subj., imp., pp.; cf. **ben** AS bēon

be prep. by; be my trouthe] truly, verily AS bī

beare inf. bear; cf. **bere**; beare lyfe] live

beaute: beauty; **beauteis** pl. OF.

bech: beech tree AS bēce f.

become inf. become; **becomen** pp.; wher is becomen] what has become of AS becuman

bed: bed; **bedde**; **beddes, beddys, bedis** poss.; **bedde** pl. AS bed

beddynge: bedding

bede 1 pt. pl., pp. ordered; cf. **bidde**

bedes pl. beads AS bed- (in comp.) prayer < biddan

beede 1 pr. s. offer; 2 pr. pl.; **bede** pp. AS bēodan

beek sb. beak; **bek** OF bec

beel amy: good friend OF bel ami

beem sb. beam; **bemes** pl. AS bēam m.

been pl. bees AS bēo f.

beende: bend AS bendan

beer 3 pt. s bore; cf. **bere**

beerd: beard AS beard m.

beere: bier AS bǣr f.

beeste: beast OF beste

beete inf. kindle, mend; **betten** 3 pt. pl. AS bētan

befill 3 pt. s. happened; cf. **bifalle** AS befeallan

beforn: beforehand AS beforan

began pt. s. **beginne**

begge inf. beg OF begger

begged: a begged] a-begging (old gerund ending -ath); cf. **a**

beggere: begger OF begart

beggestere: beggar woman OF beg + AS estere f. suff.

begile inf. beguile, deceive be + OF guiler

begoon: situated; cf. **bigon**

beheette: promised AS behātan

beholde: behold, look at; on to behold] look upon AS behealdan

behoteth 3 pr. s. promise; cf. **behote** AS behātan

behynde: behind, in the rear ranks AS behindan

bek: beak; **bekys** pl. OF bec

bekke: beck, nod

beleve inf. believe AS ge-lȳfan

belle sb. bell AS belle

Bellona: Goddess of War

Belmarye: a Moorish kingdom in Africa, Benamarin

bemes pl. trumpets AS bēmes

bemes, bemys pl. beams AS bēam

ben inf. to be; pp. AS bēon

bene: bean AS bēan f.

benedicite: bless ye; often pronounced as a three-syllable word, ben'cite, bendiste Lat.

benefice sb. ecclesiastical living OF.

benethen: beneath AS beneoðan

bente: grassy slope AS beonet, "a grass"

benygne a. kindly OF benigne

benygnely: lovingly

benyngnytee: benignity OF benignite

beo 3 pl. pr. be; cf. **ben**

berafte 3 pt. s. bereft AS birēafian

berd sb. beard; forked berd] forked beards were the custom among the bourgeois of Chaucer's day; make his berd] beguile him; double berd] two beards F 1252; cf. Janus AS beard m.

bere sb. bear; **beres** poss. or pl. AS bera m.

bere sb. bier; cf. **beere**

bere sb. pillow case; cf. **pilwebeer** AS bere "covering"

bere, ber inf. bear, endure; 1 pr. s; 3 pr. s. subj. pierce; **bereth** 3 pr. s.; **bar** 3 pt. s.; **bore, borne** pp.; bere on honde] pretend, "bluff" AS beran

berie inf. bury; **beryed** pp. AS byrgan

berkyng sb. barking AS beorcan

Bernard: St. Bernard (1091-1153)

Bernard: Bernardus Gordonius, professor of medicine at Montpellier, was a contemporary of Chaucer

berne: barn AS bern

berth 3 pr. s. beareth; berth on honde] chargeth; cf. **bere**

Berwyk: a town in Northumberland, on the Tweed

berye sb. berry AS berie

beryed pp. buried

berynge: bearing, behavior

beseche inf. beseech ME sechen

besely, bisily: busily AS bisig

besette inf. employ, bestow; 3 pt. s.; pp.; **beset** pp. be + AS settan

besey pp. beseen; wel besey] good-looking, fair to see; cf. **see**

bespreynte pp. sprinkled, bedewed AS besprengan

beste sb. beast; **bestis** pl. OF beste

besy: busy, anxious AS bysig

besyede 3 pt. pl busied AS bysgian

besyly: busily

besynesse: business AS bysig + ness

bet ad. better AS bet

bet: better; go bet] go as rapidly as possible

bete inf. amend; cf. **beete**. AS bētan

bete 1 pr. s. beat, hammer; 3 pr. s. subj.; **beten, bet** pp. AS bēatan

beter: better AS betra

beth imp. pl. be

bethenke 1 pr. s. refl. consider; imp.; **bethoughte** 1 pt. s. AS beþencan

Bethulia: home of Judith q. v.

bethynke inf. imagine, contrive

betraysed 3 pt. s. betrayed be + OF trair

betre ad. better

betten 3 pt. pl. kindle; cf. **beete**

betwex, betwixen, betwixsyn, betwixe: betwixt, between AS betweox

betyde: happen ME be + tiden < AS tīdan

betyme: promptly be + tīme

betyr: better

Beute: Beauty

bevere a. of beaver AS beofor m. (n)

Beves: Sir Bevis of Hampton, a popular Middle English metrical romance

bewayled 3 pt. s. bewailed ME be + wailen

bewreye inf. betray be + AS wrēgan "accuse"

beye inf. buy AS bycgan

bi: of, about AS bī

bibledde: drenched with blood AS bī + blēdan

Biblis: Byblis, changed to a fountain on being rejected in love

bicched: cursed (orig. uncert.)

biclappe: catch AS clappan

bidaffed pp. befooled (orig. uncert. < daff "fool")

bidde: ask, command; **bit** 3 pr. s.; **bade** pt. s.; **byd** imp. AS biddan

bifalle inf. befall; pp.; **bifil** pt. impers.; **bifelle** 3 pr. s. subj. AS befeallan

bifore, biforn ad., prep. before AS beforan

biforen ad. in the front of

biforn a. forehanded, prudent

bigamye: bigamy, marrying twice OF bigamie

bigan 3 pt. s. began; cf. **bigynne** AS beginnan

bigeten pp. begotten AS be + gitan

bigile inf. beguile; cf. **begile** ME be + OF guiler

bigon: situated, beset; wel bigon] happy; wo bigon] distressed AS bigān

bigonne 2 pt. s.; **began** pp. bord bigonne] sat at the head of the table; cf. **bigynne**

bigynne inf. begin; **bygynneth** 3 pr. s.; **bigonne** 2 pt. s.; **bigan** 3 pt. s.; **bigonne** pp. AS beginnan

biheeste: promise AS behǣs

biheete inf. promise; **bihight** pp. AS behātan

bihight pp. promised; cf. **biheete**

biholde inf. behold; cf. **beholde**

bihote 1 pr. s. promise

bihoveth: it is necessary, fitting AS bihōfian

bihynde: behind

biknowe inf. acknowledge, confess; **biknewe** 3 pt. pl. AS bi + cnāwan

bileeve: creed AS gelēafa

bileve: stay behind AS belǣfan

bille: bill, petition NorF bille > billet

biloved pp. beloved AS be + lufian

Bilyea: wife of Duellius; she was silent about his defects

biquethe 1 pr. s. bequeath; pp.; AS becweðan "make a statement"

biraft pp. bereft; cf. **bireve**

bireve inf. bereave, deprive; **birāfte** 3 pt. s. bereft; **biraft** pp. AS birēafian

biseged pp. besieged; cf. **sege**

biseke 1 pr. s. beseech; **biseken** 1 pr. pl.; **bisekynge** p. ME be + sechen

bisette 3 pt. s. employed, used; cf. **besette**

biseye pp. beseen, adorned; **yvel biseye**] ill-appearing; cf. **besey** AS besēon

bishrewe 1 pr. s. curse be + AS scrēawa "shrew-mouse"

biside: near, beside; hym **bisides**] around him, at hand AS be sīdan dat.

bisily: busily

bismotered pp. stained, soiled ME bi + smot; cf. Sw smuts "dirt"

bistad: ill-situated, troubled ME bisteden < Scan; cf. AS stede

bistowe: bestow bi + AS stōw, "place"

bistrood 3 pt. s. bestrode AS bestrīdan

bisy a. busy AS bysig

bisynesse: business

bit: but AS būtan

bit 3 pr. s. biddeth; cf. **bidde**

bitake 1 pr. s. commit AS be + ME taken

biteche 1 pr. s. consign to AS bitǣcan

bitokneth 3 pr. s. signifies ME be + AS getācnian

bitore: bittern OF butore

bitrayseth 3 pr. s. betrays; **bitraysed** pp. OF trair

bittre: bitter AS bitter

bityde inf. betide, happen to; 3 pr. s. subj.; **bitidde** 3 pt. s. AS be + tīdan

bitynge: sharp AS bītan

biwaillen inf. bewail; **biwailled** pp.; cf. **bewayled**

biwreye inf. reveal, betray be + AS wrēgan

biyonde: beyond AS begeondan

bladdre: bladder AS blǣdre f.

blak: black; a man in blak] John of Gaunt, in black for the death of his duchess, Blaunche AS blac, blæc

blakeberyed: a blackberrying, wandering

blaked pp. turned black

blame sb. censure OF blasmer

blame inf. condemn; **blamyd** pp.

blankmanger sb. a compound of capon, rice, milk, sugar and almonds, named from its color OF.

blaspheme sb. blasphemy Lat blasphēmāre

blasphemour: blasphemer

bleched pp. bleached AS blǣcan

bledde 3 pt. s., pl. bled AS blēdan

Blee: Blean Forest, near Canterbury

blent 3 pr. s. blinds; pp. AS blindan

blered pp. bleared, dimmed ME bleren "to become watery"

blerying of an eye: cheating, tricking

blew a. blue OF bleu

blew pt. s. **blowe** AS blāwan

bleynte 3 pt. s. blenched, drew back AS blencan "deceive"

blisful a. happy, bliss-bestowing, helpful AS blīþs + ful

blisse inf. bless AS blētsian

blody: bloody AS blōdig

blondren 1 pr. pl. blunder Norw blundra "shut the eyes"

bloode: blood AS blōd n.

blosmy: full of blossoms AS blōsma + y, ig

blowe inf. blow; **blowe, blowen** pp. blown, proclaimed by heralds AS blāwan

blynd: blind AS blind

blysse: bliss, joy AS blīþs f.

blythe: glad AS blīþe

blythely: gladly

blyve: quickly, soon; as blyve] very soon ME be + lȳve

bobance: brag, boast OF

Bobbe-up-and-down: a village near Canterbury

bocher: butcher OF bochier

bode sb. delay < abood; cf. **abyde**

bode sb. foreboding AS bod n. message

bode pp. bidden; cf. **bede**

body: body, corpse AS bodig

bodyn pp. bidden; cf. **bidde**

Boece: Boethius "De Consolatione Philosophiæ," a Latin work in prose and verse, popular in the Middle Ages. Boethius (Boetius) lived 475-524 A. D. He also wrote a treatise on music. He was put to death by Theodoric

boght pp. bought; boghte agayne] redeemed; cf. **bye**

Boghtoun under Blee: Boughton-under-Blean, a village five miles from Canterbury

boille inf. boil, cook OF boillir

boistous: loud, rude < OF boisteus(?)

boistously: loudly

bok: book AS bōc f.

Boke of the Leoun: a lost work of Chaucer's

bokeler: buckler, a small round shield OF bucler

bokelynge: buckling

boket: bucket OF boket < AS būc pitcher

bolde: to grow bold; cf. AS bealdian

boldely: boldly

boldenesse: courage

boles: bulls AS bula(?)

Boloigne: Boulogne, France, on English Channel, visited by pilgrims because of an image of the Virgin

Boloigne: Bologne in Italy

bombleth: makes a booming noise ME < boonen < Du(?)

bonde s. bond OF bande

bonde pp. bound; cf. **bynde**

bone: boon, request Icel bōn AS bēn f.

bontee: generosity OF.

boon: bone AS bān n.

boond 3 pt. s. bound; cf. **bynde**

boor: the Erymanthian boar slain by Hercules AS bār m.

boot sb. boat AS bāt m.

boot 3 pt. s. bit; cf. **byte**

boote: help, remedy AS bōt f.

bootes pl. boots OF bote

boras sb. borax OF < Arab

bord sb. board, plank, side of ship, table; bord bigonne] sat at the head of the table; **borde** AS bord n.

bord inf. to board OF aborder

bordit pp. jested OF bourder

bore pp. born; cf. **bere**

borel sb. coarse garments OF burel "coarse woollen cloth"

borel a. rude; borel men] laymen

bores: boars; poss. AS bār m.
borne pp. **bere**; cf. **bere**
borowe, borwe: security; **seynt John to borowe**] St. John for security (protection on journey) AS borg m.
borwe inf. borrow AS borgian
bost sb. boast AF bost
bote sb. good; **for bote ne bale**] for good nor for ill AS bōt f.
botel: bottle; **a botel hey**] bundle of hay OF botel
boterflye: butterfly AS butere + fleoge f.
bothe pl., poss. pl. both AS bā, þā
botme: bottom AS botm m.
bouk: trunk of the body AS būc m.
bounden pp. bound; cf. **binde**
boundes: bounds AF bounde
bountee: kindness, generosity OF bonte
bounteous: bountiful OF bontif
bour, bouris pl. bower AS būr m.
bourde: joke OF.
bow, bowys pl. bough AS bōg m.
bowe sb. bow AS boga m.
bowen inf. bow; **boweth** 2 imp. s.; **bowynge** p. AS būgan
bowgh: bough, branch AS bōg m.
bown: ready, prepared Icel buinn
boxtree: symbolical for paleness AS box m.
boydekyns: daggers, bodkins Gael orig.(?)
boyste: box OF boiste
bracer: a leather guard to protect the arm from the bowstring OF.
Bradwardyn: Proctor at Oxford 1325, afterwards chancellor
brak 3 pt. s. broke; cf. **breke**
bras: brass AS bræs n.
brast 3 pt. s. subj. would burst; cf. **bresten**
braunches: boughs OF branche
brawen: brawn of the boar OF braon
brawnes: muscles
brayed pp. started; cf. **breyde**
brayn: brain AS brægen n.
brede: breadth AS brǣdu m.
breech: breeches AS brēc, s. of brōc f.
breede, breed: bread AS brēad n.
breek 3 pt. s. subj. broke; cf. **breke**
breem: bream, a fresh water fish OF bresme
breeth: breath AS brǣð m.
breke inf. break, break off, go to pieces; **brake, broke** 3 pt. s.; **breek** 3 pt. s. subj. AS brecan
brekers: breakers, trespassers
brekke: flaw, wrinkle AS brece(?)
brembulflour: flower of the bramble AS brembel m.
breme: furiously, famously AS brēme
bren sb. bran OF.
brenne, bren inf. burn; 3 pr. pl.; **brendest** 2 pt. s.; **brende, brente** 3 pt. s.; **brend, brent** pp. AS bærnan
brennynge sb. burning
brennyngly: ardently
breres: briars AS brǣr f.
brest sb. breast; **breste**. AS brēost n.
bresten inf. break, burst; **brest** 3 pr. s.; **bruste, brosten** 3 pt. pl.; **breste** 3 pr. s. subj; **brast** 3 pt. s. subj. AS berstan
bretful a. brimful AS brerd "brim" + ful
bretherhood: brotherhood AS broðor + hood
breyde 3 pt. s. cast; **brayed** pp. AS bregdan
brist: breast; cf. **brest**
bristplate: breastplate OF plate
Britaigne: Brittany, Bretagne in France
Britons: Britons, the Welsh
Brixseyde: Briseis, beloved by Achilles, and cause of his quarrel with Agamemnon (Iliad I)
broche: brooch OF.
brod sb. brood AS brōd f.
brode a. broad AS brād
brode ad. broadly, plainly
broght pp. brought; cf. **bryngen**
broille inf. broil AF broiller
broke 3 pt. s. broke; cf. **breke**
bronde: brand, fire brand AS brand m.
brosten, broste 3 pl. pt. burst; cf. **bresten**

brotelnesse: frailty; cf. **brutelnesse**
brother: brother; **brother, brothres** poss. s. AS brōðor
brouded pp. embroidered OF **brosder**
broughte 3 pt. s.; **broughten** 3 pt. pl. **brought**; cf. **bryngen**
brouke: enjoy the use of AS brūcan
broun, broune a. brown AS brūn
browdynge: embroidery
browes: brows AS brū, pl. brūa, brūwa f.
browken 3 pr. pl. subj. enjoy; cf. **brouke**
browhte 3 pt. s. brought
broyded pp. braided OF **brosder** + AS bregdan, by confusion
Brugges: Bruges, city in Belgium
bruste: 3 pt. pl. burst; cf. **bresten**
brustles: bristles
brutelnesse: instability, "brittleness" ME brotel < AS brēotan "break" + nesse
Brutes Albyoun: Brutus Albion, England, founded according to legend by Brutus
Brutus Cassius: an error by Chaucer for Brutus and Cassius, the conspirators (the symbol & being probably omitted in Vincent of Beauvais, Chaucer's source)
bryddis: birds AS bridd m.
brydel sb. bridle, rule AS brīdel
brydeleth 3 pr. s. bridles, governs in love
bryghte: bright AS berht, beorht
brymstoon sb. brimstone, sulphur ME brenstoon "burning stone"
bryngen inf. bring; **broughte, browhte** 3 pt. s.; **broughten** 3 pt. pl.; **broght** pp. AS bringan
brynke: brink Icel brekka(?) "crest of hill"
brynne: burn; cf. **brenne**
buk, bukke: buck, so-called from the sixth year on AS bucca m.
bulles: bulls, papal edicts Lat bulla "seal"
bulte 3 pt. s. built AS byldan
bulte it to the bren: sift to the bran OF bulter
Burdeux: Bordeaux: **Burdeuxward**: the region of Bordeaux
burdoun sb. burden of song, bass accompaniment OF bourdon
burel: of rough cloth; hence, rude; cf. **borel**
burgeys sb. burgess OF burgeis
burghes: towns AS burg f.
burned pp. burnished OF burnir
Burnel the Asse: Burnellus seu speculum stultorum (The Mirror of Fools) by Nigel Wireker about 1200
burthe sb. birth Icel byrð f.
burye inf. bury AS byrgan
buryeles: burial-places < AS byrigels, tomb
Busirus: Busiris, a king of Egypt, slain by Hercules, confused by Chaucer with Diomedes, king of Thrace, of whom the story of the mare is told B 3293
buskes: bushes Scan busk
bussh: bush; bussh unbrent] the burning, but unconsumed, bush which Moses saw was considered a symbol of Mary's constant virginity
but conj. unless, except AS būtan
but ad. but, only; prep. without
but if: unless
butiller: butler OF butuiller
buxomly: obediently AS būhsum + līc
buxhumnesse: obedient spirit
by: for, concerning, by the example of, with reference to
by and by: side by side
by ony weye: in every way
bycause: because ME bi + cause
byd imper. order; cf. **bidde**
byde inf. wait AS bīdan
bye inf. buy, pay for; **bie** 1 pr. s. AS bycgan
byfore, byforen: before AS beforan
byheste: behest, promise; pers.
byhove inf. need AS bihufian
byjaped pp. befooled, tricked OF japper "yap"
byldere: builder, used in building
byle: bill AS bile m.
bynde inf. bind; **bynt** 3 pr. s.; **boond** 3 pt. s.; **bonde** pp.; **bounden** pp. AS bindan

byndyng sb. binding
bynne: bin AS binn
bynt 3 pr. s. binds; cf. bynde
byte inf. bite, take hold; bytith 3 pr. s.; boot 3 pt. s. AS bītan
bythoght pp. bethought AS biþencan
byttyrnesse: bitterness
byynge: buying

C

caas sb. chance, misfortune; pl. cases of law OF cas
cacche, cachche inf. win; caughte, kaught 1 pt. s., pl.; kaught, kaute pp. NorF cachier
Cacus: a famous giant, robber and cannibal, strangled by Hercules
Cadmus: the founder of Thebes; Cadme
cake: round, flat loaf of bread Icel kaka
calandier: calendar, record OF < Lat.
Calistopee: Callisto; cf. Calyxte
calle: caul, close cap or net OF cale
calle inf., 3 pt. s. call; callid 2 pt. pl. Icel kalla AS ceallian
Calyxte: Callisto, nymph of Diana, ancestress of the Arcadians, turned into a bear (the star Arctus) for her infidelity to chastity
camaille: camel NorF camel
Cambalo: son of Cambynskan
Cambynskan: Genghis Khan, grandfather of Kublai Khan
Campaneus: Capaneus, one of the Seven against Thebes
Canacee: Canace, sister and mistress of Macareus (Ovid)
Canacee: daughter of Cambynskan
Cananee: Canaanitish
Candace: queen of India, beloved of Alexander
candel: candle AS candel
Cane: Cana, town in Galilee, John ii. 1
canel-boon: collar bone OF canel "channel"
canoun: the "Canon in Medicine," a work by Avicenna
cantel: portion ONorF cantel
capitayn: captain OF capitaine
Capitolie: the Capitol in Rome
Cappaneus: Capaneus, one of the seven heroes who besieged Thebes; killed by a thunderbolt as he was scaling the wall
cappe: cap; sette hir aller cappe] cheated them all AS cæppe
capul: nag Icel kapall(?)
cardyacle: heart-spasm Lat.
care: care, trouble; a sory care] a misfortune AS caru f.
careyne, carayne: carcase, carrion OF caroigne
carf 3 pt. s. carved. Carving was one of the duties of the squire
carie inf. carry; caryeden 3 pt. pl.; caried pp. ONorF carier
cariynge: carrying
carl: churl, low fellow AS ceorl m.
carole inf. dance to the accompaniment of a song sung by the dancer OF.
caroles pl. a dance with singing OF.
carolewyse: like a carol
carpe inf. chatter, talk Icel karpa
carpenteris poss. carpenter's ONorF carpentier
Carrenare: Various attempts have been made to expain the "dry sea" and the "Carrenare." The former has been explained variously as the Sahara, the "Gravelly Sea" of Mandeville, the variable Lake of Czirknitz, and the "Adrye Se" or Adriatic. Carrenare is generally explained as the Gulf of Carnaro. J. L. Lowes has collected good evidence to show that the dry sea is the Lop Nor (sand lake) or Desert of Gobi in Asia, near which was situated a Kara Nor (Black Lake). Both of these are close to the old overland caravan route from China, and are found on medieval maps. To go "hoodeles" there would be a test of love, indeed. Such tests of love are a common convention in Chaucer's time

Cartage: Carthage, ancient city on the African shore of the Mediterranean

carte: cart, chariot AS cræt n.

cartere: carter, charioteer

caryeden 3 pt. pl carried

cas: luck, chance, case

Cassandra: the daughter of King Priam, had the power of prophecy, but also a curse which prevented belief in her prophecies. Therefore she had the sorrow of foreseeing all the misfortune of the city without being able to use her knowledge and prevent the coming evils

cast sb. plan, occasion Icel kast

caste 1 pr. s., 3 pt. s. cast, conjecture, purpose, plan; **casteth** 3 pr. s.; **cast** pp.; with hys on ye caste up] looked up Icel kasta

castel: castle; **longe castel**: a reference to Lancaster, John of Gaunt ("seynt Johan"), earl of Richmond ("ryche hille"), and husband of Blanche ("with walles whyte") AS castel

castigacioun: punishment Lat castigatio

casuelly: by accident OF casuel

catel sb. chattel, property OF.

caughte 3 pt. s. caught; cf. cacche

Caunturbury: Canterbury

cause: cause, purpose, plea, reason; cause why] there's a reason OF.

causeles: without reason

caytyf sb., **caytayves** pl. prisoner, wretch OF caitif

caytyf a. wretched

Cecile, Cecilie: Cecilia, Christian martyr, died at Rome 230 A. D.; cf. heven for explanation of etymologies

ceint sb. girdle OF.

celerer: cellarer OF cellerier

celle sb. a small monastery under the control of another monastery; **celle fantastik**: the part of the brain whence fancies arose; the brain was divided into three cells, each the seat of a different faculty OF celle

cely: silly, innocent, poor AS sælig

Cenobia: Zenobia, queen of Palmyra

centaure, centaury: an herb OF centorye

Centauros acc. pl. Centaurs, fabulous half-man, half-horse

centence: sentence, matter OF.

centre: fulcrum, pivot OF.

centris: centres, the small brass projection on the rete of astrolabe, denoting position of fixed star (Sk.)

ceptre: sceptre OF.

Cerberus: the three-headed watch-dog of Hades

cercled pp. extended in a circle

cercles: circles OF.

cerial: a kind of oak Lat cerreus

ceriously: minutely Lat ceriose, seriose

certeinly ad. certainly OF certein

certes, certis: truly OF.

certeyn a. certain, sure OF certein

certeyn ad. certainly, surely

ceruce sb. a cosmetic made from white lead OF ceruse

cerymonyes: observances of forms of courtship OF ceremonie

Cesar: Julius Cæsar

Cesar: Cæsar, the emperor; Augustus L 592

cese, cesse inf. cease OF cesser

cetewale: valerian, an herb OF citoual

chaar: chariot OF.

chaast: chaste OF chaste

chaastnesse: chastity OF chast

chace inf. chase, hunt, drive OF chacer

chaffare: bargaining, business AS chap price + faru f. business

chaffare inf. bargain

chaier: chariot OF chaiere

Chaldeye: Chaldæa

chalenge inf. claim; **chalange** 1 pr. s. OF.

chamberere: chambermaid OF.

chamberleyn: chamberlain OF chambrelenc

chambre: chamber; marriage-cham-

ber, marriage; chambre of parementz] presence-chamber OF.

champartie: equality, division of power OF.

champioun sb. champion OF.

chanon: canon, member of religious order, like monks, but under different rule

chaped pp. provided with metal mountings OF chape

chapeleyne: chaplain; the office is held by a nun OF.

chapiteris: chapters OF.

chapman: merchant AS cēap + man

chapmanhode: trade, business

charbocle: carbuncle OF charboncle

chare: chariot OF char

charg, charge sb. care, trouble, responsibility OF.

charite: charity, love OF.

Charles Olyver: Charlemagne's Olyver, a peer of France, brother-in-arms of Roland

chasted pp. taught OF chastier

chasteyn: chestnut OF chastaigne

chastise inf. discipline OF.

chastitee: chastity OF.

chaunce: chance, incident OF.

chaunge sb. exchange OF.

chaunge inf. change

chaungeable a. changeable, fickle

chauntepleure: half joy, half sadness, a song of alternate spirits OF.

chauntery sb. chantry, an endowment to pay a priest to sing daily masses for the soul of the giver of the endowment, or of some one designated by him OF chanterie

chayer: chair, palanquin OF. chaiere

cheep: market; greet cheep] low price, cheap (in modern sense) AS cēap m.

cheere sb. cheer, manner, behavior, countenance OF chere

chees 2 imp. choose; cf. **chese**

chefe a. chief OF chef

chek: "check!" in chess; check and mate] checkmate, a term in chess denoting that the king cannot be moved. This ends the game OF eschec

cheke: cheeke-bone; pl. **cheeks** AS cēare f.

chekkere s. chess-board OF.

Chepe: Cheapside (market street) London

cher, chere: manner, look; cf. **cheere**

cherisseth 3 pr. s. cherishes; **cherish** imp. s. OF cheris- < cherir

cherl: churl, base fellow, menial; **cherles** poss. used as ad. churlish AS ceorl

cherlyssh: churlish

cherubynnes poss. pl. the cherubim were generally painted red in medieval pictures

cheryse inf. cherish OF cheris-

chese inf. choose; imp.; **ches** 1, 3 pt. s.; **chose** pp. AS cēosan

chesse: game of chess OF.

cheste: coffin AS cest

chesynge: choosing

chevache: journey a-horseback OF chevauchie

chevetayn: chieftain, leader OF chevetain

chevise refl. do for herself OF chevir

chevyssaunce: contract for borrowing money, note OF chevissance "accomplishment"

cheyne: chain; **cheynes** pl. Zenobia was so weighed down with gold chains and gems that she could scarcely walk B 3554 OF chaëne

Chichivache: the lean cow which, in the old fable, lived upon patient wives, and in consequence was always very lean OF.

chidde 1 pt. s. chid; cf. **chyde**

chiere: mien; cf. **cheere** OF.

chiertee: regard, good-will OF.

chiknes pl. chickens AS cīcen

Child, Childe: a title for a squire or a knight, as Childe Harold AS cild

childely a. childish, immature

childhede: childhood

chirch, chirche: church AS cirice

chirche-dore: church-door; couples were married in the church-porch,

and then entered the church for mass

chirkyng: harsh noise, creaking AS cearcian

chiste: chest AS cist

chivalrie: knighthood, with its customs and ideals; knightly prowess; group of knights OF.

choghe, chough: crow; cf. AS ceō

chose pp. chosen; cf. **chese**

choys: choice OF choix

chuk: cluck, clucking noise

chukketh 3 pr. s. clucks

chyde: chide, scold; **chidde** 1 pt. s. AS cīdan

chymbe: the rim of a barrel, stave ends AS cim

chymbe inf. chime OF cymbe NF chimbe

chyn: chin AS cin

chyvachee: exploit a-horseback, military expedition OF chevauchie

Cibella: Cybele, Great Mother of the Gods

Cilinios: Mercury, born on Mt. Cyllene in Greece

Cipion: cf. Scipioun

Cipre: Cyprus

cipress, cipresse: cypress, the symbol of mourning OF cypres

Circes: Circe, the sorceress who turned Odysseus's companions into swine by an enchanted cry. Odysseus forced her to restore his companions

circumstaunce: ceremony OF.

Cirea: Cirra, a town near Parnassus

Cirus: Cyrus, king of Persia

ciser: cider OF sisre

citee: city OF cite

Cithe, Cithea: Scythia

Citherea: a name for Venus, who was fabled to have risen from the sea near the island of Cythera

Citheroun: Cithæron or Cythera, island sacred to Venus

citole: a psaltery, a stringed instrument OF.

citryn a. citron, yellow OF citrin

cladde 3 pt. s. clothes; **cledde**, clothed pp. AS (North) clǣdde

clamb 3 pt. s. climbed; cf. **clymben**

clamour: clamor OF.

clappe: noise, chatter; cf. Icel klappa

clappeth 3 pr. s.; imp. pl. chatter

clappyng: chattering

clariounes: clarions, trumpets OF clarion

clarre: wine mixed with honey and spices, and strained "clear" AF claret

clateren 3 pr. pl clatter; **clatereden** 3 pt. pl.; cf. AS clatrung, a rattle

claterynge: clattering

Claudius: Marcus Claudius, the "cherl" of Appius Claudius

Claudius: the second emperor of Rome 268-270

Claudyan: Claudius Claudianus, author of "De Raptu Proserpinæ," about A. D. 400

clawe inf. scratch, rub, stroke; **clawed** 3 pt. s. AS clawu f.

cledde pp. covered

cleer, cleere: clear, unspotted OF cler

cleernesse: brightness, glory

cleft 3 pt. s. split; **cloven** pp. AS clifian

clemence: clemency, pity OF.

clene: clean, smooth, neat AS clǣne

clenly: cleanly

clennesse: cleanness, purity

clense inf. cleanse AS clǣnsian

Cleopataras: Cleopatra

clepen inf. call; **clepith, clepeth** 3 pr. s.; **clepe** 3 pr. pl.; **cleped** pp. AS cleopian

cler, clere a. clear OF cler

clere ad. clearly

clerer: clearer

clergeon: chorister, choir-boy OF.

clergye: learning OF.

clerk: the term for a student in university, a scholar preparing for the priesthood, a learned man, or a man in holy orders AS clerc

Cliopatre: Cleopatra, queen of Egypt

clippe: cut Icel klippa

Clitermystra: Clytemnestra, wife of

Agamemnon, slew him with the help of Ægisthus, her lover

clobbed: clubbed

cloistre: met, enclosure; cf. **cloystre** OF.

cloke: cloak OF.

clokke: clock; at the clokke] o'clock OF cloke

clombe 1 pt. s. climbed; **clombe, clomben** pp.; cf. **clymben**

cloos inf. close; **closed** pp. OF clos < clore

clooth: cloth, clothing; **clooth of Tars**] a kind of silk AS clāð m.

clooth-makyng sb. cloth-making, an important industry in Western England

clos: close, yard OF clos

clote-leef: leaf of burdock AS clāte

clothe: cloth

clothered: clotted AS clott

cloumbe pp. climbed

clout: bit of cloth; **cloutes** pl. rags AS clūt m.

cloven pp. cleft, split

clowde: cloud AS clūd m.

clowe-gylofre: clove OF clou "nail"

cloysterer: a retiring, secluded monk

cloystre sb. cloister OF cloistre

clyffes pl. cliffs AS clif n.

clymben inf. climb; **clymbeth** 3 pr. s.; **clombe** 1 pt. s.; **clamb** 3 pt. s.; **clomben, cloumbe** pp. AS climban

clymbyng: climbing, ambition

clynkyn inf. ring; cf. Fries klinken

clynkyng: jingling

cod: bag, belly AS cod m.

cofere, cofre: box, coffer, coffin OF cofre

cok: cock (to awaken us) AS cocc

cokewold: cuckold, deceived husband OF cucualt

cokkel: cockle, a weed AS coccel

Cokkes: slang for **Goddes**

cokkow: cuckoo OF cucu

colblak: coal-black AS col

colde: cold, fatal AS ceald

coldes inf. make cold AS cealdian

cole sb. coal AS col n.

cole a. cool, without imaginative fire AS cōl

colera: choler, with blood made rede colera Lat cholera

colered pp. collared, decked with a collar OF coler

colerik: choleric, hot tempered OF cholerique

colfox: fox tipped with black, as with coal

collacioun: conference OF collation

collect yeeris: anni collecti, a term for periods of years in round numbers (20, 40, 60, etc.)

collusioun: plot OF.

Coloigne: Cologne, where the bones of the three Wise Men of the East were said to be preserved

colour, coloure: color, pretense; **under colour**] in the guise of, masked under P 66; **colours**: fine phrases E 16; **colouris** pl. OF.

colpons: portions, bunches OF.

coltes: colt's, frisky AS colt

comande, comaunde inf. command, order OF comander

comandement: command

comandour: director

comaundynge: commanding

come sb. coming < AS cyme

come inf. come; **cometh** 3 pr. s.; **come** pt. s., pp., pr. s. subj.; **cometh** imp. < AS cuman

comelely ad. handsomely, gracefully AS cymlīc

comelynesse: comeliness, beauty

comende inf. commend OF comender

commissioun sb. commission

commune sb. the commons; **commoners** pl. OF.

commune, comoun a. common; **in commune**] commonly

compaas, compas: circle, orbit OF.

compaignye, companye: company, group, lovers OF compaignie

comparisoun: comparison OF.

compassioun: compassion OF.

compassyng: contrivance

compeer: comrade, gossip OF compere

compilatour: compiler OF.

complexioun: complexion OF.

compleyne inf. complain; 2 pr. pl.
compleynt: complaint, lament OF compleint
composicioun: agreement; pl. elaborate arrangements OF.
compowned pp. constructed, adapted Lat componere
comprehende inf. understand, appreciate; **comprehendid** pp. Lat comprehendere
comune a. accustomed (to); cf. commune
comunly: commonly
comyn, cumin: a spice OF cumin
comyn inf. come; **comyth** 3 pr. s.; cf. come AS cuman
concluden inf. conclude, include Lat concludere
concubyn sb. concubine OF concubine
condescende inf. stoop to OF condescendre
condicion, condicioun: condition, stipulation, character OF.
condicioneel: conditional OF conditionel
confedred pp. confederated, united Lat confœderatus
confermed pp. confirmed, decreed; **confermeth** imp. pl. OF confermer
confessioun sb. confession; power of confessioun] the right to hear confession OF.
confiture: confection, compound OF.
confort: comfort OF.
conforteth 3 pr. s. comforteth; **conforten** pr. pl.
confus: confused OF.
congregacioun: assemblage OF.
conjoynynge sb. conjunction
conquereden 3 pt. pl. conquered OF conquerre
conquerour: conqueror OF.
conquerynge sb. conquest
consaille 1 pr. s. counsel OF conseil
conscience: pity, sympathy OF.
consecrat: consecrated Lat consecratus
conseil sb. council, counsel, secret counsel, secret, counsellor OF.
conseille inf. counsel OF conseiller
conseillyng sb. counsel
consentant of: accomplices in OF.
consente inf. agree to OF consenter
conserve 2 imp. s. preserve OF.
conseyve inf. understand OF conceiver
considere 1 pr. s., imp. consider OF considerer
consistorie: place of judgment OF.
consolacioun: consolation OF.
conspiracie: plot OF.
constable: governor; **constablesse** f. OF conestable
constance: constancy OF.
Constantyn: Constantinus Afer, a monk of Monte Cassino, founder of school of Salermo, eleventh century
constellacioun: constellation OF.
constreyneth 3 pr. s. constrains; **constreyned** pp. OF constraindre
contek: strife OF contec
contenance, contenaunce: countenaunce, demeanor; sign OF.
continueel: continual OF.
contraire, contrarie sb. adversary, opposite OF.
contrarien inf. oppose AF contrarie
contrarius: opposite
contrarye a. contrary
contre, contree, contrey: country, district OF contree
contynue: encourage, further OF continuer
converte: turn, change; **convertynge** p. OF convertir
convoyen inf. convey; **convoyen his mateere**] give his information; **convoyed** pp. accompanied OF conveier
conyes: rabbits OF conil
coold a. cold AS ceald
coomb: comb (of a cock) AS camb
coome 3 pr. s. subj.; cf. come
coomen 3 pt. pl. came
coost, cost: coast, countryside; **by the cost**] along the coast OF coste
coote: coat OF cote

cop sb. top AS cop

cope sb. priest's cloak AS cape f.(?)

coppe: cup, measure; withouten coppe] without stint AS cuppe f.

corage: heart, spirit, disposition OF.

corageus: courageous OF corageos

corde sb. cord OF.

Cordewane: Cordovan leather OF cordewan

cordial: gold, in the form of aurum potabile, was used in medicine. Chaucer's play upon words is obvious Lat cordialis

cormeraunt: cormorant OF cormerant

corne: corn, grain (not the Indian corn of America), wheat, best part; pl. fields of corn AS corn n.

corniculer: secretary Lat corniculer

corny: strong of corn or malt

corone: garland Lat.

coroned pp. crowned OF coroner

coroune: crown OF corone

corowne: crown

corps: corpse OF.

corpus: body; **corpus dominus**: for corpus domini, the Lord's body

correccioun: correction, punishment OF.

corrumpable: corruptible OF corrompable

corrupcioun: corruption OF.

corrupteth pr. s. becomes corrupt; **corrupt** pp. Lat.

cors: corpse OF.

corsed pp. accursed AS cursian

Corynne: Corinna, Ovid's mistress, celebrated in his "Amores," the source of "Anelida and Arcite"

cost: choice, condition; nedes cost] of necessity OF cost

costage: cost, expense OF.

costes for to quite: to pay expenses

coste: inf.; pt. s. cost OF coster

cosyn: cousin OF cosin

cotage: cottage AS cot + -age

cote sb. coat OF.

cote: cot, cottage, dungeon AS cote

cote-armure, cote-armour: the coat or vest worn over the armor, embroidered with the knight's armorial bearings

couche sb. bed OF.

couche inf. cower, lie, set; **couchede** 3 pt. s. set in order; **couched** pp. laid, studded, beset OF coucher

coude pt. s. could; cf. **konne**

counseyl sb. counsel; cf. **conseil**

counted, counte pt. s. counted, cared OF conter

countenaunce: looks, facial expression; OF contenance

counter, countour: one who counts, mathematician Du 435; abacus, or counting board Du 436; accountant or auditor A 359

counterfete, countrefete inf. counterfeit OF contrefait pp.

countesse: countess OF.

countretaille: at the countretaille] in reply OF contretaille

countyrpletyd pp. pleaded against OF contre + plaidier

cours: course, orbit, way, course (of a meal) OF.

courseres: coursers, war-horses OF coursier

courtepy sb. short coarse cloak Du kort "short" + pije "coarse cloth"

couthe 1 pt. s. could, knew; **known** pp.

coveiteth: covets; cf. **coveten** AF coveiter

coveitise, coveityse, coveytyse: covetousness, greed OF coveitise

covenable: natural, proper, fit OF.

covenant sb. agreement; **covenantz** pl. OF.

covent: convent OF.

coverchief: kerchief or head covering OF couvrechef

coveten inf. covet; **coveiteth** pr. s. OF coveiter

covyne sb. deceitful agreement of two men against a third; **covin** (law term) conspiracy OF covin

cow: chough, jackdaw; cf. AS cēof

cowardye: cowardice OF couardie

cowntenaunce: appearance OF.

coyn, coyne: coin OF coin, coign

cracchynge: scratching orig. uncert.; cf. MS scratten
cradel sb. cradle AS cradol
craft, crafte sb. skill, cunning, art, profession, trade AS cræft
craftier: more crafty
crafty: crafty, skilful
craumpisshed: cramped, paralyzed OF crampe
creacioun: creation OF creation
creance: belief, faith, object of belief OF creance
creat pp. created Lat creatus
creatour: Creator OF creatour
creest: crest OF creste
creature: creature, person OF.
Creon: tyrant of Thebes
crepe inf. creep; **crepeth** 3 pr. s.; **crepte** 3 pt. s.; **cropen** pp. AS crēopan
Cresus: Crœsus, king of Lydia, famed for his wealth, and for his unhappy downfall
crewel: cruel OF cruel
creweltee: cruelty OF cruelte
cri sb. cry OF cri
crien inf. cry, cry for; **crien** 3 pr. pl.; **crye** 2 pr pl.; **cridestow** 2 pt. s. did you cry; **cride, cried** 3 pt. s.; **criden, crieden, criedyn, crydon, cryede** 3 pt. pl.; **crie** imp. OF crier
Crisippus: Chrysippus, name of some Greek philosopher, mentioned by Jerome
crisp, crispe: curly AS crisp
Crisseyde: "Troilus and Criseyde," Chaucer's poem
cristal stones: glass cases
Cristemasse: Christmas AS cristes mæsse
cristen, cristene a. Christian AS cristen
cristendom: the Christian faith B 351 Christian lands AS.
cristenly: as a Christian
Cristes poss. Christ's
cristned pp. christened AS cristnian
Cristophere: a small figure of St. Christopher was frequently worn for good luck
cristyanytee: company of Christians
criynge p. crying
croce: stick, staff OF croce
croked: crooked, wrong ME crōk + ed
crockedly: crookedly
crokke: crock, jar AS crocca
crommes: crumbs AS cruma
cronycle sb. chronicle OF cronique
cropen pp. crawled; cf. **crepe**
croper: crupper OF cropere
croppe: top, sprout, branch end, crop, fruit AS cropp m.
croude inf. drive out AS crūdan
crouned, crowned pp. OF coroner
crowdyng: pushing
crowe sb. crow AS crāwe f.
crowe inf. crow; **croweth** 3 pr. s. refl.; **crew** 3 pt. s. AS crāwan
croys sb. cross OF crois
crueel: cruel OF.
crueltee: cruelty
crulle a. pl. curled ON kurle
cryature: person; cf. **creature**
crydon, cryede 3 pt. pl. **cried**; cf. **crie**
cryke sb. creek OF crique
cubites: cubits Lat cubitus
cum of: come away, cease (jocular)
cumpas: a circle OF compas
cunne 3 pr. pl. know how; cf. **conne** AS cunnan
cuntre-houses: native homes
Cupide, Cupido: Cupid, God of Love, represented as a young man in Chaucer
cuppe: cup AS cuppe f.
curat sb. curate, parish priest Lat curatus
cure sb. cure, remedy, care, heed, diligence; **diden cure]** were busy; **take no cure]** care not OF cure
curios, curious a. careful, skilful OF curios
curre: cur Scan kurre
curs sb. curse AS curs
cursede a. accursed
cursen inf. curse, excommunicate AS cursian
cursydnesse: curse, sin
cursyng: cursing
curteis a. courteous OF curteis

curteisie, curteysie, curtesye sb. courtesy, ways of court OF.
curtyn: curtain OF curtine
curyosytee: subtle care OF curiosite
curyus: carefully wrought OF curios
Custance: Constance
custume: custom OF custume
cut: lot; cf. W. cuturs, a lot
cynk: cinq, five OF cinq
Cypride: Venus, born at Paphos in Cyprus
Cypyon: Scipio
Cytherea: Venus; cf. Citherea

D

daggere: dagger F dague
daisie: daisy AS dægesēge
daliaunce: friendly talk, gossip OF daliance
Dalida: Delilah, the Philistine woman who discovered the secret of Samson's strength and betrayed him to the Philistines; cf. Judges xvi.
damage: pity OF.
Damascien: Johannes Damascenus, Arabian physician of probably the ninth century
dame: mother, goodwife; madame] madam OF.
damoysele: damsel OF damoisele
dampnable: damnable OF damnable
dampnacioun: damnation OF damnation
dampned pp. condemned OF damner
Damyssene: Damascene; Eden was thought to have been near Damascus
Dane: Daphne, pursued by Apollo, was saved from him by being turned into a laurel tree. Hence the laurel is Apollo's tree
Dant, Dante: Dante Alighieri, 1265-1321, Italian poet, wrote "Divina Commedia"
Danyel: Daniel
dappull-gray: dapple-gray Icel depill "spot"
dar 1, 3 pr. s. dare; darst 2 pr. s.; dorste, durst, durste pr., pt., pr. subj. AS dear
Dares Frygius: Dares the Phrygian. He is mentioned together with Dictys Cretensis, as the source of the history of the Trojan War written by Guido delle Colonne, who really took his material from the Roman du Troie of Benoit de Sainte-Maure. Guido's history was popular; Chaucer uses material from it elsewhere
darreyne inf. to decide one's claim to OF deraisnier
dart, dartis pl. dart, spear, set up as prize in races OF dart
Daryus: Darius, king of Persia
daswen 3 pr. pl. blink; cf. daze
daun, dan: sir, a title of respect OF dan
daunce sb. dance; olde daunce] old sport OF dance
dauncen inf. dance; daunsith 3 pr. s.; daunsedyn 3 pt. pl. OF dancer
daunger: peril, penalty, control, power OF dangier
daungerous: masterful, threatening OF dangeros
daunsedyn 3 pt. pl. danced; cf. dauncen
daunsith 3 pr. s. dances; cf. dauncen
daunsynge p. dancing
daunte imp. s. rule; dauntist 2 pr. s. AF daunter
dawe inf. dawn; daweth 3 pr. s.; dawed pp. AS dagian
dawenynge sb. dawn, daybreak
dawes: days AS dagas
dayerye: dairy AS dæge "dairymaid" + F. erie
dayeseye, dayseie, dayesyis, daysyes pl. daisy AS dægesēge
de Casibus Virorum Illustrium: on the falls of famous men (from good fortune), a work by Giovanni Boccaccio, upon which model the "Monkes Tale" is based
de owter mere: from over sea, imported

debaat sb. contest, conflict OF debat

debate inf. fight OF debatre

debonaire a. gentle, gracious; as s. courteous person OF.

debonairly: debonairely, graciously

debonairyete: gentleness, graciousness OF.

declare inf. declare OF.

declinacioun: angle of the sun in the ecliptic OF.

ded, dede, deed a. dead, deadly; be deed] be slain AS dēad

Dedalus: Dædalus, legendary artist and mechanician of Greece, chiefly noted for his attempt to fly by means of attached wings. Mentioned as a typical mechanician, whose mechanical skill cannot help the mourner

dede: deed, act; with the dede] as soon as it is done AS dǣd f.

dede 3 pt. s. did; cf. doon

dede pp. died; cf. dye

dedely, dedly: deadly, mortal

deduyt: delight OF deduit

deedly: death-like

deef: deaf AS dēaf

deel, del, dele: part, share AS dǣl f.

deelen inf. deal AS dǣlan

dees: dice OF det, pl. dez

deeth sb. death; the death] the pestilence AS dēað m.

defame sb. dishonor OF defamer

defaulte: fault, check (hunting term); lack OF defaute

deffenden inf. forbid OF defendre

deffye, defye 1 pr. s. defy F deffier

degree: rank in life, step OF.

deiedyn 3 pt. pl. died; cf. dye

deite, deitee: deity OF.

deknes: deacons AS deacon

del, dele: part, share; every del] wholly; never a dele] not a bit; cf. deel

deliberacioun: deliberation OF deliberation

delicaat: delicate, dainty Lat delicatus

delicasye: wantonness, vain delight OF delicacie

delices: delights Lat deliciæ

delit, delite sb. delight, pleasure OF delit

delitable: delectable, pleasing OF.

delite inf. delight OF deleitier

3 pr. s. delite

delivere inf. free OF delivrer

Delphos: acc. form of Delphi, famous for Apollo's temple

delve inf. dig; **dolven** pp. AS delfan

Delyt: pers. Delight; cf. delit

delyvere a. active OF delivre

delyvered pp. set free; cf. **delivere**

delyverly: with dexterity

demande s. question OF demander

demen inf. imagine, judge, decide AS dēman

Demetrius: king of the Parthians

Demociones: of Demotion, a Greek

demeyne: dominion OF demaine

Demophoun: Demophoön; cf. Phyllis

dempne 1 pr. s. despise, damn OF dampner

demyn inf. deem, judge; cf. **demen**

dennes pl. dens AS denn n.

depardieux: in God's name

departe inf. part, separate, leave; **departen** 1 pr. pl. OF departir

departynge sb. departure

depe a. deep AS dēop

depe ad. deeply

Depeford: Deptford, about three miles from Southwark

depeynted pp. depicted OF depeint

depper: deeper

depryved pp. deprived OF depriver

dere a. dear AS dēore

dere ad. dearly

dere inf. harm AS derian

derke a. dark AS deorc

derke sb. darkness

derkeste: darkest

derre: dearer

Dertemouthe: Dartmouth, in Devonshire

deryveth 3 pr. s. is derived OF deriver

desclaundred pp. slandered OF esclandre

descresyoun: discretion OF discretion
descripcioun, discripsioun: description OF description
desdeyn sb. disdain OF desdein
desdeyne inf. disdain OF desdegnier
desever: dissever, part OF desevrer
deseyte: deceit OF deceite
desir sb. desire OF.
desire inf. desire OF desirer
desirus, desirous a. desirous OF desiros
desirynge: yearning
desolat: dejected, weakest of influence, forsaken OF.
despence: support OF dispense
despendest 2 pr. s. wasteth OF despendre
despeyred pp. sunk in despair OF desperer
despit sb. spite, contempt, act of despite OF.
despitous: merciless, contemptuous, angry OF despitos
despitously: pitilessly
displayeth 3 pr. s. displays OF desployer
desport: amusement, sport; cf. OF se desporter
destene: cf. **disteyne**
destinee: destiny OF destinee
destourbe inf. destourbe of] hinder in OF destourber
destourbing: disturbance
destreyneth 3 pr. s. oppresses OF destraindre
destroubled pp. troubled, disturbed OF destroubler
destroyeth: ruins OF destruire
destruccioun: destruction OF destruction
Desyr: pers. Desire
deth, dethe: death
dette: debt OF dette
dettelees a. free from debt
dettour: debtor OF.
deve a. pl. deaf AS dēaf
devele way a. to the devil! AS dēofol
devisioun: division, party; of my devisioun] under my influence OF division
devocioun: devotion OF devotion
devoir: duty OF.
devoutely: devoutly OF devote
devyne inf. divine, predict OF deviner
devys sb. device, direction OF devis m.
devysen inf. imagine, tell; **devyse** 1 pr. s. OF deviser
dewe: dew AS dēaw m. and n. (wa- stem)
dextrer: courser OF destrier
dey, deye inf. die; **deyde, deyede** 3 pt. Scan.
deye: dairymaid AS dǣge f.
deyne inf. deign; **deyned, deynid** 3 pt. s. refl. OF digner, deigne 3 pr. s.
deynge p. dying
deyntee a. dainty, pleasant, high bred OF deintie
deyntee sb. regard, estimation, desire; pl. dainties
deyntevous: dainty
deys sb. dais, platform OF deis
Deyscorides: Dioscorides, Greek physician and botanist of the second century
deyynge: dying
Dianira, Dianyre: Deianira, jilted by Hercules, sent him a poisoned shirt, which consumed him when put on
dide 3 subj. did; cf. **doon**
Dido: queen of Carthage, heroine of the "Æneid"
diete sb. diet OF diete
diffame: ill repute OF diffamer
diffens: defence OF defense
diffinicioun: definite order Lat definition
diffye inf. defy, despise F deffier
diffyne inf. declare plainly OF definer
diffynytyve: final, definite
digestioun: digestion OF digestion
digestyves: aids to digestion OF.
dighte inf. prepare, serve, decorate; 3 pt. s.; **dight** pp. AS dihtan
digne a. worthy, proud, distant OF.

dignitee: worth, rank, dignity OF deintie Lat dignitas
dilatacioun: delay Lat dilatio
diocise: diocese OF diocese
Diogenes: Diogenes, Greek philosopher in Alexander's time
direct: directed Lat directus
dirke: dark AS deorc
dirkenesse: darkness
discensioun: dissension OF.
discerne inf. discern OF discerner
disceyvable: deceitful F decevable
dischevele: disheveled, disarranged, with hair flowing loosely OF descheveler
disconfiture: defeat OF.
disconfitynge: discomfiture OF desconfit
disconfort: discomfort, discouragement OF desconfort
disconforten inf. discourage
discrecioun: discretion OF discretion
discret: discreet
discripsioun: description OF description
discryven inf. describe OF descrivre
discure inf. reveal, disclose OF descovrir
discussid: pp. discussed Lat discussus
disese: discomfort OF desaise
disespaired pp. hopeless OF disespere
disfigurat: ugly OF desfigurer + Lat suff. atus
disfigure sb. deformity
disgysed pp. disguised OF desguiser
disherited pp. disinherited OF desheriter
dishobeysaunt: disobedient OF desobeir
dishonour sb. disgrace OF deshonneur
disjoynt sb. trouble OF desjoinct
diskryve inf. describe; cf. **discryve**
dismalle s. unlucky day. Dismal comes through French from the Latin dies malus, evil day. Later the -al suffix caused it to be used as an adjective. The days of the ten plagues of Egypt were considered as unlucky. Unlucky days were also called Ægyptiaci
disparage sb. disgrace OF desparager
disparaged pp. misallied
dispeir sb. despair OF despoir
dispence: expenditure, extravagance OF dispense
dispend inf. spend OF dispendre < Lat.
dispensacioun: dispensation
dispeyred: despairing
dispise inf. despise OF despire
dispit sb. despite OF despit
dispitouse: cruel; cf. **despitous** OF despitos
dispitously ad. angrily
displesance, displesaunce: annoyance, displeasure OF desplaisance
displese inf. displease OF desplaisir
dispoillen inf. despoil OF despoillier
disport sb. sport OF.
disporte inf. amuse OF se desporter
disposed pp. in condition, health OF disposer
disposicioun: disposition, situation; character as determined by position of planet OF disposicion
disputisoun: dispute OF.
dissencioun: strife
disserved pp. deserved OF desservir
dissever inf. dissever, part OF dessevrer
dissimulour: dissimulater, liar OF dissimuler
dissymulynges: pretences
distaf: distaff AS distæf
disteyne, dysteyne inf. cf. **destene** bedim, take away the color of OF desteindre
distraynyth: clutches; cf. **distreyne** OF destraindre
distresse: distress, trouble, sorrow OF destrecier
distreyne inf. constrain
disturbaunce: trouble OF destourbance

divers, dyverse: different, changed OF.
divinistre: diviner, prophet OF < deviner
divisioun: distinction, sect OF division
divisynge: devising
divyn: divine OF divin
diyng: dying
do, doo, don, doon inf., imp. have, cause to be; cf. **doon** AS dōn
doctour: doctor; doctour of Phisik] physician; Augustine, the "holy doctor" of the Middle Ages OF.
doctrine: learning, instructive tales or speech OF.
does sb. pl. does AS dā
dogerel: doggerel < dog
dogges: dogs AS dogga
doghter: daughter; poss. daughter's AS dohtor
doghty: strong, valiant AS dohtig
doke: duck AS dūce f.
dokked pp. cut close; cf. Icel dockr short tail
dolven: buried; cf. **delven**
dom, doom: judgment; to my dom] in my opinion AS dōm
domesman: judge AS.
dominacioun: control, power AS domination
Donegild: mother of King Alla
dong sb. manure; **donge** dat. AS dung
donge inf. cover with manure
dongeoun: dungeon, donjon OF donjon
donghil: dunghill
doom: judgment, decision; cf. **dom**
doon, doone, done, doo, do inf. do, cause, make for; doon wroght] caused to be made; for to doone] proper; **doth, dooth** 3 pr. s.; dooth for to] causes to; doth me dye] slays me; **don** 2 pr. pl.; **did, dede, dyd** 3 pt. s.; did of] took off; **dide** 3 pr. subj.; **done** pp. AS dōn; cf. Appendix
dore: door AS duru f.
Dorigene: wife of Arveragus < Celt Drognen
dormant: permanent; cf. **table** OF.
dorste 3 pt. s. dared; cf. **dar**
dotage: dotage, folly OF.
doted pp. doting OF doter
doubelyth 3 pr. s. doubles OF dobler
double: deceitful OF doble
doughter: daughter AS dohtor
doughtyr: daughter, Pleasure, daughter of Cupid
doumb a. dumb AS dumb
doun ad. down AS of-dūne
doune prep. down
dounward: downward
doute sb. doubt, fear OF doute
douteless: doubtless
dowaire: dowry OF doaire
dowbilnesse, dowblenesse: duplicity
dowere: dowry OF doaire
downe sb. down, upland region AS dūn
downe sb. down, soft feathers Icel dūnn
dowve: dove (pigeon); **dowvis** pl. AS dūfe
doynge: act, deed
draf: refuse, chaff orig. uncert.
dragoun: dragon (cited in Ecclesiasticus xxv. 16 Sk.) OF dragon
drasty: filthy AS < dærstan + ig
draughte: draught; move at chess AS dragan, "drow," "move"
drawen inf. draw, incline, carry, bring, recall; **drough, drow** pt. s. **drawe** pp. drawn, moved in a game; drawe the same draught] made the same move AS dragan
drecched pp. bored, troubled AS dreccean
drede sb. fear, doubt, hesitation; withoute drede] doubtless, surely AS drǣdan
drēde inf. be afraid, fear; **drede** 1 pr. s.; **dreddest** 2 pt. s.; **drad, dradde, dredde** 3 pt. s.; **dradden** 3 pt. pl. subj.; **drad** pp. AS drǣdan
dredeful: fearful, cautious
dredeles, dredles ad. without dread, fearlessly, certainly
dreem, drem sb. dream AS drēam
dreint 3 pt. s. drowned; cf. **drenche** AS drencan
dremed 1 pt. s. dreamed
dremyth 3 pr. s. dreameth

drenche inf. drown; **dreint** 3 pt. s.; **dreynte** pp. AS drencan
drenchyng: drowning
drery: dreary, sad AS drēorig
dresse inf., 3 pr. pl. fit up; arrange, make ready OF dresser
drewh 3 pt. s. drew, attracted
drevyne pp. driven
dreye: dry AS drȳge
dreynte pp. drowned; cf. **drenche**
drive inf. drive; drive away] pass away AS drīfan
drofe 3 pt. s. drove; cf. **dryven**
drogges sb. pl. drugs OF drogue
drogthe sb. drought, dryness AS drūgað
dronkelewe: a drunkard, drunken + lǣwe AS suff.
dronken 1 pt. pl. drank; pp.; **dronke** pp. cf. **drynken**
dronkenesse: drunkenness
drope sb. drop AS dropa m.
droppyng: leaking
drough 3 pt. s. drew; cf. **drawe**
drouped 3 pt. pl drooped Icel drūpa
drow pt. s. drew, drew near; cf. **drawen**
drugge inf. drudge orig. uncert.; cf. AS drēogan
drye a. dry, dried up, wizened; drye se] ; cf. **Carrenare** AS drīge
drye 1 pr. s., 3 pt. pl. endure AS drēogan
drynke sb. drink AS drincan
drynken inf. drink; **dronken** pt. pl., pp; **dronke** pp.
dryve inf. drive, compel; **drofe** 3 pt. s.; **dryven** pp. AS drīfan
duc: duke OF.
duchesse: duchess OF.
duel, duelle inf. dwell, remain; cf. **dwelle** AS dwellan
duetee: duty AF duete
duewe: due OF deu; cf. **deue**
dul, dulle a. dull; cf. AS dol
dulnesse: dullness
Dun is in the Myre: an old game; serving-men attempting to drag the "horse" (a log of wood) along a kitchen floor. Dun = The dun horse
Dunmowe: a village in Essex, where a flitch of bacon was yearly offered to the couple who could prove their first year and day of marriage happily spent
dunne a. dun, dark AS dunn
duracioun: duration OF duration
dure inf. endure, last OF durer
durst, durste 1 pr. s., pt. s. subj., dare; cf. **dar**
duszeyne: dozen OF dosaine
dwellen inf. 3 pr. pl dwell, delay; **dwelled, dwelte** 3 pt. s. AS dwellan
dwellynge sb. residence
dyademe: diadem, crown OF diademe
dyamauntz: diamonds OF diamant
Dyane: Diana, goddess of chastity and of hunting
dyapred pp. diversified with figures OF diapré
dych sb. ditch AS dīc, dat. dīce
dyched pp. ditched, moated
dyd pt. s. did; cf. **doon**
dyde 3 pr. s. subj. should die; cf. **dye**
Dydo: Dido of Carthage, who slew herself for grief and anger when her lover, Æneas, secretly deserted her
dye inf. die; **dyde, dyed** pt. s.; **deiedyn** 3 pt. pl.; **dede** pp. Icel deyja
dye 3 pr. pl. dye; **dyed** 3 pt. s., pp. AS dēagian
dyere: dyer
dyke inf. ditch AS dīc
dynt: stroke AS dynt
dys pl. dice OF det, pl. dez
dyvers, dyverse a. diverse, various
dyvded pp. divided
dyvyne a. divine
dyvynynge p. foretelling
dyvynys: divines, theologians

E

ealyth 3 pr. s. ails AS eglam
ease inf. ease OF aise
eate inf. eat AS etan
ebbe sb. ebb-tide AS ebba
ebbe inf. ebb AS ebbian
Ebrayk: Hebrew OF ébraïque
Ebrew: Hebrew
ebrought pp. brought; cf. **brynge**

Ecclesiaste: Ecclesiastes, a book of the Bible (xxv. 25)

Ecclesiaste: Ecclesiasticus, one of the books of the Apocrypha (xii. 10)

ecclesiaste: prelate OF.

ech, eche a. each; **ech a]** every AS ǣlc

echon: each one, each

Eclympasteyre: son of the god of sleep

ecome pp. come

Ecquo: Echo, who fell in love with Narcissus. When he slighted her love, she pined away until only her voice was left

Ector: Hector, son of King Priam of Troy, chief fighter on the Trojan side

edrawe pp. drawn

eek, eke, ek: eke, also AS ēac

eelde, elde: age, time AS ældu, yldu

eere pl. ears AS ēare n.

eerly: early AS ǣrlīce

eeste: east AS ēast

effect: fact AF.

eft, efte ad. again, another time AS eft

eft-soones: eftsoon, again AS eft + sōna

Egeus: king of Athens and father of Theseus

egge: edge AS ecg f.

eggement: egging

Egipcien: Egyptian

Egipte: Egypt

egle: eagle; **eglis** pl. AF egle

ego pp. gone

egre: sour, bitter, sharp AF egre

eighe: eye AS ēage n.

eightetethe: eighteenth

eir: air OF air

ek: eke, also; cf. **eek**

Ekko; cf. **Ecquo**

eknowe pp. known

elde: age; cf. **eelde**

eldres pl. ancestors AS yldra

eleccioun: selection OF election

element: element. In Chaucer's time all matter was thought to be composed of the four elements: earth, air, fire, and water OF.

elenge: tedious, unendurable AS ǣlenge

Eleyne: Helen, wife of Menelaus of Sparta. She was seduced by Paris, q. v., and this caused the Trojan war

elf: sprite, witch AS ǣlf

elf-queene: fairy queen

Eliachim: priest of Bethulia

Elicon: Mt. Helicon, confused with some fountain sacred to Apollo (Hippocrene, Castalia)

elis: eels AS ǣl m.

ellas: alas! cf. F helas

ellebor: hellebore, an herb OF ellebore

elles, ellis: else AS elles

eloquence: eloquence OF.

Elpheta: wife of Cambynskan

elves; cf. **elf**

elvysch: elf-like, reserved, shy

embassadour: ambassador OF.

embassadrye: diplomacy OF.

embosed pp. embossed, plunged into the thick woods OF embosquer

embrace inf. hold OF embracer

embrouded pp. embroidered OF enbroder

Emeleward: toward Emelye

Emelye: sister of Hippolyta, heroine of the "Knightes Tale"

emeraude, emeroude: emerald MF esmeraude

Emetreus: king of India, who fought with Arcita

emforth prep. to the extent of AS em = efen + forð

emperesse, emperice, emperise, emperisse: empress OF.

emperoures pl. emperors OF empereor

empoysoned pp. poisoned OF empoisonner

empoysonere: poisoner

empoysonyng sb. poisoning

emprenteth 2 imp. pl. imprint; **emprented** pp. OF empreindre

emprentyng sb. impression

emprise: enterprise, undertaking OF emprise

enbaumme: embalm OF embaumer

enbrace inf. embrace; **enbraceth** pr. s. OF embrace

encens sb. incense OF.
encense inf. cast incense
enchauntement s. enchantment OF.
encheson: occasion, reason OF enchaison
enclyne inf. bow, stimulate; **enclyned** pp. inclined OF encliner
encomberous: burdensome < OF encombrance
encombred pp. encumbered, caught OF encombrer
encrees sb. increase AF encrestre
encrese inf. increase; **encreseth** 3 pr. s.; **encresede** 3 pt. s.; **encressed** pp.
ende: end AS ende m.
endelees: endless
endelong ad. lengthwise, along
endelong prep. along
endere sb. ender
endite inf. write, compose OF enditer
endure inf. endure, live OF endurer
endytyng: mode of writing
Eneas: Æneas, hero of the Æneid of Virgil; cf. **Dido**
enemyte: enmity AF enemite
Eneydos: the Æneid (quoted in gen. case)
enforce inf. strengthen OF enforcer
enformed pp. informed OF enformer
enfortuned: devised OF enfortuner
engendre inf. procreate, produce; **engendred** 3 pt. pl.; **engendred** pp.; **engenderede, engendrid** OF engendrer
engendrure: propagation OF.
engin: skill, genius OF.
Englis, Englissh: English
engyn: machine OF engin
engyned pp. tortured
enhauncen inf. raise, promote; **enhaunsed** pp. OF enhancier
enhorte inf. exhort OF enhorter
enlumyned 3 pt. s. illumined OF enluminer
enoynt pp. anointed OF enoint pp.
enquere inf. inquire OF enquerre
enquerynge: inquiry
ensample: example, sample AS ensample
ensure inf. pledge, engage one's self, take security for OF en + seür
entencioun: intention OF entention
entende inf. give attention to, strive OF entendre
entent, entente: intent, intention, will; doo thyn entent] be intent, give heed; in good entente] with resignation OF entent
entewnes pl. tunes OF entones
entirmes: entremet, dish served between courses OF entremet
entirmetyn: (of) middle, mix one's self (in); cf. **entremette**
entraille: entrails OF.
entre inf. enter OF entrer
entree: entrance OF entre
entremette inf. interrupt OF entremettre
entrikyth pr. s. snares OF entriquier
entuned pp. intoned OF entoner
entytlt pp. entitled F en + title
envenyme inf. poison OF envenimer
envoluped pp. enveloped, enwrapped OF envoluper
envye sb. envy, hatred OF envie
envye inf. vie, strive, envy OF envie
envyned pp. stored with wine F envine
envyous: envious OF envios
eny: any AS ænig
eonde 1 pr. s. end; cf. **ende**
Epicurus: Greek philosopher, whose doctrine was that pleasure is the chief good in life
Epistelle of Ovyde: Ovid's "Epistolæ," or Heroides, a series of poetical letters supposedly addressed by unfortunate women to their lovers
equacions: equations, exact quantities Lat æquationem
equynoxial: equinoxial circle F.
equitee: equity, fairness OF equite

er conj. ere, before; **er that**: before AS ǣr

er prep. before

er, ere sb. ear; ear (of corn) AS ēar n.

erande: errand AS ǣrende n.

erbe: herb F herbe

erber: arbor OF herbier

erchedekenes poss. archdeacon; erchedekenes curs] excommunication; purs is the erchedekenes helle] the archdeacon would punish him in his purse; i.e., he could avoid the curse by giving money arch + AS deacon

Ercules: Hercules, famed for his feats of strength. He rescued Alcestes from Hades

ere inf. plough AS erian

eresye: heresy OF heresie

Eriphilem: acc. case of Eriphyle, wife of Amphiaraus

erl: earl AS eorl

erly ad. early AS ǣrlīce

erme inf. feel pain, grieve AS yrman

Ermony: Armenia

Ermyn: Armenian

ernest sb. a serious matter; ernest of game] seriousness out of sport AS eornost

errante, erraunt a. wandering, stray; near middle of chess-board OF errant

Erro: Hero; cf. **Leandre**

errour: error, doubt OF.

erst: first, at first AS ǣrest

ert: art

erthe: earth AS eorðe f.

erthely: earthly

erys pl. ears AS ēare

escapen inf. escape AF escaper

eschaunge sb. exchange; in eschaunge shuldes selle] profit by the different rates of exchange in the different money-markets OF eschange

eschue inf. eschew, shun AF eschuer

Esculapius: the Greek god of medicine, son of Apollo

ese sb. ease OF aise

ese inf. ease, help, accommodate, compensate; esed atte beste] given the best possible service

esily ad. with ease

espye sb. spy OF espie

espye inf. spy, find out OF espier

est, eest sb. east; ad. eastward

estaat, estat: estate, rank, dignity, condition OF estat

estatlich a. stately

estatly ad. with dignity

Ester: Esther

Estoryal Myrour: Speculum Historiale of **Vincent**, q. v.

estres: parts, nature OF estre "to be," then "state," "part," "division"

estward: eastward

esy: easy, mild OF aisié

ete inf. eat; **etyn** 3 pr. pl.; **eet** 3 pt. s. ate; **ete, eten** pp. AS etan

eterne a. eternal OF.

Etike: the "Ethics" of Aristotle, in which virtue is represented as a mean between two extremes (Sk.)

etyn 3 pr. pl. eat

Eva: Eve

Evangeliset: Evangelist, writer of Gospel

evaungiles: The Gospels OF evangile

eve: evening AS ēfen

evel ad. ill AS yfel

even, evene ad. exactly, cautiously; bere even] act with moderation; ful even] actually AS efen

evene a. equal, well-matched, ordinary, full

even-song: evening prayer; if even-song and morwe-song accorde] if in the morning you agree to the evening's plan

eventyde: evening

ever: ever; evere in oon] altogether; ever leng the worse] the worse the longer it hangs; evere lenger the more] the longer, the more AS ǣfre

everech: each one; cf. **everich**

everemoore: evermore

everich, everiche: every one, each AS ǣfre + ǣlc

evermo: evermore, constantly ever + mo
everychon: every one
everydel, everydelle: entirely, completely
everylyche: constantly ME ever + ylike, AS gelīce
ew: yew-tree AS īw
ewysse: I wis
exaltacioun: sign in which a star has greatest power for good or ill OF exaltation
exaltat pp. raised in zodiacal sign Lat.
exametron: hexameter Lat.
excuse inf. pardon OF.
execucioun, execussyoun: execution OF execution
exemple sb. example OF example
exercise inf. exercise OF excercice
expans yeeris: anni expansi, a term for separate numbers of years below twenty, in tables
experience: proof, example OF.
expowne inf. explain
expres: expressly OF.
expresse inf. 3 pr. pl. express < expres
expulsif: expellent; cf. vertu OF.
extenden 3 pr. pl. are extended Lat extendere
extorcioun: extortion OF extorsion
ey: egg AS æg n. pl. ægru
eye: eye; eyen pl.; at eye] at a glance AS ēage n.
eyleth 3 pr. s. ails AS eglan
eyr: air OF air
eyre: heir, son OF heir
eyther, eythir: either AS æghþer

F

fables: stories OF.
face: a division of the signs of the zodiac in mediæval astrology
facoun: falcon OF faucon
facound, facounde sb. eloquence Lat facundus a.
facound a. ready, fluent Lat facundus
facultee sb. ability F faculte
fader, fadre: father, ancestor, patriarch; father's poss.; fader kyn] father's family AS fæder
fadme pl. fathoms AS fæðm
faile sb. failure, fail F faillir
faillen inf. fail; failled 3 pt. s.
fair, faire a. fair; as sb. a fair part; a fair] an excellent specimen AS fæger
faire ad. fairly, well
fairer: more fair
fairnesse, fairenesse sb. square living, uprightness; swiche a fairenesse of a nekke] a neck of such fairness
Fairye: Faerie, Fairyland
fal sb. fall
fal inf fall; cf. falle
faldyng sb. coarse cloth, frieze
falle inf. fall, happen, prosper, belong to; falleth, fallys 3 pr. s.; falleth in my thoght] comes to my mind; fel 3 pt. s.; fil, fille pt.; falle 3 pr. s. subj.; falle pp.; AS feallan Icel falla
falow: yellow, pallid AS fealu
fals a. false OF fals
falsen inf. be false to, betray, lie
falsly: falsely
faltren: falter; orig. uncert.
falwes: soft, fallow fields AS fealgas "harrows"
famulier: familiar OF familier
fan: the quintain was pivoted; its two parts were the "fan" or "board" (shield), and the "club" or "bag." The tilter, on striking the board, had to dodge the swing of the bag which followed AS fann
fantasye, fantesye sb. desire, fantasy OF fantasie
fantome: fantastic vision OF fantosme
fare sb. conduct, proceeding, business; evil fare] ill hap, misfortune AS faru "journey" f.
fare inf. fare, prosper, behave, proceed; faren 1 pr. pl.; ferde, ferden pt. s., pl.; fare pp. AS faran
farewel, farwel: farewell
farsed pp. stuffed F farce
faste ad. rapidly, fast; faste by] near by AS fæste

faste 1 pr. s. fast AS fæstan
fastynge s. fasting
fattyssh: fat, plump
faucon: falcon; faucon peregryn] peregrine falcon OF faucon
fauconers: falconers
faught 3 pt. s. fought; cf. fighte
fauned 3 pt. s. fawned on AS fagnian
fawe: fain, glad AS fægen
fawnes: fauns Lat faunus
fayerye: fairies, Fairyland OF færie "enchantment"
fayle inf. fail; cf. faillen
fayn a. glad AS fægen
fayne ad. gladly; han fayn] fain have
fayner a. gladder; ad. more gladly
fayneste: gladdest
faynte inf. faint; feyntest 2 pr. s.; OF feint pp. of feindre
fayr ad. well
fayre sb. fair AS fæger
fayrest: fairest, most beautiful
feble: feeble AF feble
fecchen inf. take, bring; fette 3 pt. s.; fet pp. AS fecc(e)an
fedde 3 pt. s. fed AS fēdan
feder: feather; federys pl. AS feðer
fedme pl. fathoms AS fæðm
fee: pay; fee symple] estate free from any limitation or entail AF fee
feeld: field; feeldes pl. the field or background of banner- or arms; feeld of snow, etc.] Bertrand du Guesclin, constable of France, bore in his coat-of-arms a black eagle, upon a silver field ("feeld of snow") with a red band ("lymerod") across the whole, from left to right AS feld m.
feelyngly: sympathetically
feend: fiend AS fēond m.
feendly: fiendish
feendlych: fiendish
feere sb. fear AS fær
feere sb. mate; in feere] with each other AS gefēra m.
feeste: merriment; cf. feste OF feste
feestlych: fond of feasts
feet: feats, acts AF fet
feith: faith OF fei + -th (cf. truth)
feithful: faithful
fel, felle a. evil, cruel OF fel
fel 3 pt. s. fell; cf. falle
felawe sb. fellow, chum Icel fēlagi m.
felaweshipe: fellowship, company
felde: field; feldys pl.; cf. feeld
feldefare: fieldfare, a kind of thrush ME felde + fare
feldyn: 2 pt. pl. felt; cf. felen
fele a. many AS fela
fele inf. feel; feled 3 pt. s.; feldyn 2 pt. pl. AS fēlan
felicitee: happiness OF.
felle inf. fell, cut down; fild pp. AS fyllan, fællan
felonye: felony, crime OF felonie
felowe: fellow; cf. felawe
felynge: feeling, fancy, sensitiveness, passion, artistic skill
felyngly: feelingly
felysshyppe: company, gathering
Femenye: the country of the Amazons
femynynytee: feminine form F femininite
fen: fann (Arab.) a branch of science; part of Avicenna's "canon"
fendely: fiendlike, devilish
Fenix: phœnix, a fabulous bird which every 500 years burned itself on the altar and rose again from the ashes young and beautiful
fer a., ad. far; fer ne ner] neither more nor less AS feor
ferbrond: firebrand AS fȳr n. + AS brand
ferde pt. s. prospered, went; cf. fare
fere, feere sb. fear AS fær
fere, feere sb. mate in fere together
fered pp. frightened
ferforth: far, forward
ferforthly: thoroughly
fermacies: pharmacies, remedies OF farmacie
ferme sb. rent, payment; he "farmed" the revenues of his dis-

trict, so that no one else begged in his district F ferme

ferme a. firm OF ferme

fermour: farmer, collector of taxes

fern: long time AS feorran

fern asshen: fern ashes, used as alkali in mediæval glass AS fearn

ferne: distant (pl. of ferren) AS feorran

Ferrare: Ferrara

ferre, ferrer ad. further AS feorran

ferreste a. most remote

fers: the piece at chess next to the king, which we call the queen, but which was originally the Pherz, which in Persian signifies the chief counsellor. The loss of the queen for nothing generally means the loss of the game; ferses twelve] not twelve queens; here fers is used to mean all the pieces save the king; the bishop, knight and rook counting but one apiece OF fierce

ferst: first AS fyrst

ferthe: fourth AS fēorða

ferther, ferthere: farther; cf. AS furðor

ferthyng: farthing AS fēorðung

fesaunt: pheasant AF fesaunt

fest: fist AS fȳst f.

feste sb. feast; **festys** pl. OF feste

festeiyng: feasting, entertaining OF festeier

festeth 3 pr. s. feasts

festure inf. fasten AS fæstan

fet, fete sb. pl. feet AS fēt

fet pp. fetched; cf. **fecchen**

fethere: feather AS feðr

fethered 3 pt. s. feathered

fetisly: neatly, correctly OF fetis, faitis

fette 3 pt. s. fetched, brought; cf. **fecchen**

fettred 3 pt. s. fettered, put in chains AS fetor

fettres pl. fetters

fetys: neat, well-shaped OF fetis

fevere terciane: tertian fever, with rise of temperature every other day AS fēfor

fewe pl. few AS fēawe

fey: faith; in good fey] i' faith OF fey

feyne ad. gladly AS fægen

feyne: feign, pretend, speak falsely; **feyned** pp. OF feindre, feign-ant

feyntest: makest faint; cf. **faynte**

feyntynge: fainting, failing

feynynge s. pretence

feyrenesse: beauty

feythe: faith OF fei + th; cf. truth

fieble: feeble AF feble

fiers, fierse: fierce OF fiers

fifte, fifthe: fifth AS fifta

fighte inf. fight; **fyght** 3 pr. s.; **faught** 3 pt. s.; **foghten** 3 pt. pl., pp. AS feohtan

figure: shape, figure; **figuris** pl. figures; figuris ten] the ten Arabic numerals F figure

figurynge sb. form, figure

fikulnesse: fickleness AS ficol

fil, fille pt. fell, happened; cf. **falle**

fild pp. felled; cf. **felle**

fild pp. filled

fille sb. fill AS fyllo, -u f.

filthe: filth AS fȳlð f.

finde: find, discover, invent, furnish; **fynd, fynt** pr. s.; **fond, foond, founde** 1, 3 pt. s.; **founde** pp.; **fynde** 3 pr. s. subj. AS findan

fir, fire: fire AS fyr n.

firi a. fiery

firmament: sky, heaven Lat firmamentum

firre: fir-tree; cf. Icel fura

firste table: the first of the ten commandments refers to God

firy: fiery

fissh: fish AS fisc

fissher: fisherman

fit: a portion of a song AS fit

fithele: fiddle AS fiðele

fixe pp. fixed OF fixe

flambes: flames OF flambe, flame

flater 1 pr. s. flatter; cf. Ger. flattern, F flatter

flaterye: flattery OF flaterie

flatery, flateyrynge sb. flattering
flatour: flatterer OF.
flatte: flat Icel flatr
flaugh 2 pt. s. flewest; cf. **flee**
flaume: flame OF flame
Flaundres: Flanders, a district now forming parts of France, Holland and Belgium
Flaundryssh a. Flemish
fle,fleen inf. flee, escape; **fledde** 3 pt. s.; **fleeth** imp. pl.; **fled** pp.; AS flēon
fledde 3 pt. s.; cf. **flee**
flee inf. fly; **flaugh** 2 pt. s.; **fleigh, fly** 3 pt. s.; **flowen** 3 pt. pl. AS flēogan
fleemeth 3 pr. s. banisheth; **flemed** pp. AS flēman
fleen sb. pl. fleas AS flēa m. (-n)
fleete, flete inf. float, swim; **flete** 1 pr. s.; **fleteth** pr. s.; **fleete** 3 pr. s. subj. AS flēotan
fleeth imp. pl. flee; cf. **fle**
fleight 3 pt. s. flew; cf. **flee**
flekked pp. spotted; cf. Icel flekke
flemed pp. banished AS flēman
flemere: banisher
Flemyng: Fleming, native of Flanders
flen inf. flee; cf. **fle**
flēs sb. fleece AS flēos
flessh sb. flesh, meat AS flǣsc n.
fleshly ad. in the flesh, carnal
flesshy: fleshy
flek inf., 1 pr. s. float, swim; cf. **fleete**
fletynge p. floating
flex sb. flax AS fleax n.
fleynge p. flying; cf. **flee**
flikerynge p. flickering AS flicerain
flo: arrow AS flā f(-n)
flok sb. flock AS flocc m.
flokmeele: in a flock, in troops
Flora: Goddess of flowers
floryn: florin, a coin OF florin < Florence
flotery: fluttering, unkempt < AS flotorian
flour: flower; **flourys** pl.; **flour delys**] fleur de lis, lily OF flour
flourethe 3 pr. s. blooms, flourishes; **floure** 3 pr. s. subj.; **floured** 3 pt. s.
flourouns: little flowers, florets
floury: flowery
flowen 3 pt. pl. flew; cf. **flee**
floytynge p. playing the flute OF flauter
fly 3 pt. s. flew; cf. **flee**
flye sb. fly AS flēoge f.
flynt: flint AS flint
flyttynge p. fleeting, transitory, of little value
fneseth 3 pr. s. puffs AS gefnēsan
fnorteth 3 pt. s. snoreth < AS fnēosan (wk. grade)
fodder is now forage: my provender is provided for me, as hay for a horse in winter AS fōdder
foghten 3 pt. pl. fought; cf. **fighte**
fol, fole sb. fool OF fol
fol a. foul AS fūl
folde sb. fold; metaphor for parish AS fald
folely, folily: foolishly
folie: folly OF.
folk, folke: folk, people, company AS folc n.
folwen inf. follow; **folwe** pr. s.; **folwen** pr. pl.; **folwed, folowed** 3 pt. s.; **folowed wel**] was a natural consequence; **folwynge** p. AS folgian
foly, folye sb. folly, foolishness
foly ad. foolishly
fomy a. foaming < AS fām
fon pl. foes AS fā m.
fond, fonde 1 pt. s. found; cf. **finde**
fonde inf. attempt, sound, try out AS fandian
fonge inf. receive, take AS fōn
fontstoon: font
foo: foe AS fā m.
foole: fool; **foolys** pl. OF fol
foolhardynesse: foolhardiness; pers. Pf 227
foom, fome: foam AS fām n.
foomen: foes
foond 1 pt. s. found; cf. **finde**
foore: track, way, steps < AS fōr f. journey
foot-hoot: foot-hot, speedily

foot-mantel: an outer skirt to protect the gown when riding horseback

for conj. for, because, in order that AS.

for prep. for, for the sake of, for fear of, in spite of, as far as concerns

for al: notwithstanding

for river: to the river

forage: winter food, hay; cf. fodder OF fourage

forbede, forbedeth 3 pr. s. forbiddeth; **forbede** imp.; **forbode** pp. AS forbēodan

forbere inf. refrain from, forbear; **forbereth** imp. pl. AS forferan

for blak: very black

forbode sb. Goddis forbode] [it is] God's forbidding, God forbid! AS forbod

forbode pp. forbidden; cf. **forbede**

forbrused: badly bruised

forby ad. past

fordoon inf. render vain, destroy; **fordo** pp. AS fordōn

for-dronken pp. very drunk

fordryed: dried up

foresterys pl. foresters F forestier

foreward sb. agreement AS foreweard

forfered: greatly frightened

forgate, forgete pt. s. forgot; cf. **foryete**

forgeten pp. forgotten; cf. **foryete**

forgoon inf. forego, give up; **forgo** pp. lost AS foregān

forheed: forehead AS forheafod

forkerveth 3 pr. s. hews in pieces

forkutteth 3 pr. s. cuts to pieces

forlete inf. lose, give up AS forlǣtan

forleygne: the recall note, sounded when the hounds are off the trail OF for(s)loignier "leave far behind"

forlorn pp. lost AS forloren

forme sb. form; in form] with propriety

forme inf. form; **formed** to 3 pt. s. formed so as to be

formel, formele: female bird

former: early; **former age**: olden time

formere: creator

formest a. foremost

forncast: provided

forneys sb. furnace

fornicacioun: fornication

for old: with age

forpampred: over-pampered

forpyned pp. tormented, wasted away

fors: force; no fors] no matter; no fors of] no matter about; I do no fors] I regard not

forseyde pp. aforesaid

forslewthen inf. waste idly

forsok pp. forsook

forsothe: verily

forster: forester

forswerynges: forswearing

forth, forthe: forth, onward

forther: further

forthermoor: further on

fortherover: moreover

fortheryng: furthering

forthren inf. further, assist

forthright: straightforward

forthward: forward

forthy: therefore

Fortune: the goddess of fortune

fortunen inf. give fortune; fortunen the ascendent] choose a fortunate ascendent; **fortunest** 2 pr. s.; **fortuned** 3 pt. pl. happened; **fortuned** pp.; gifted by Fortune CM 180

for-waked pp. wearied out by watching

forward: agreement

forweped pp. worn out with weeping

forwery: very weary

forwes: furrows

for-why conj. ad. wherefor, why, because

forwityng: prescience, foreknowledge

forwoot 3 pt. s. foreknew

forwrapped pp. wrapped up

foryelde inf. requite, repay

foryete inf. forget; **forgate, forgete** pt. s.; **forgeten, foryeten** pp.

foryetful: forgetful

foryeve inf. forgive; **foryeve** 3 imp. s., imp. pl.; **foryevith** imp. pl.; **foryevyn, foryive** pp.

fostred 3 pt. s., pp. fostered, brought up

fote: foot; **fote hote**] foot hot, right away

fother: cart-load

foughte 3 pt. pl. fought; **foughten** 3 pt. pl., pp.

foul sb. bird; **smale foules**] song birds

foul a. evil, dangerous

foule ad. foully

foulere: fowler

founde pt. s., pp.; **found**; cf. **finde**

foundred 3 pt. s. stumbled

founes pl. fawns, bucks in the first year

foure: four

foure and twenty: John of Gaunt was really 29. It is suggested that some scribe read xxviiij as though it were xxiiij

fourneys: furnace

fourtenyght: fortnight, two weeks

fourty: forty

fowel: bird; **smale foweles**] song birds

fownde pp. found; cf. **finde**

foyne imp. let him thrust; **foyneth** 3 pr. s.; **foynen** 3 pr. pl.

foyson: abundance

frakenes: freckles; cf. Icel **frelknur**

fram: from AS.

franchise: liberality, nobleness OF.

frankeleyn: the franklins were well-to-do farmers, householders; in social rank inferior to the knights, yet having certain dignities AF fraunkelayn

fraternitee sb. guild OF.

fraught pp. lade

Fraunceys Petrark: Francesco Petrarch [1304-1374] one of the greatest of Italian poets, best known for his sonnets to Laura. He lived at Arqua, two miles from Padua

frayneth 3 pr. s. prays AS frēgnan

fre, free a. free, gracious, liberal AS frēo

fredam, fredome: generosity AS frēodōm

freend, frend: friend AS frēond n.

freendlich a. friendly

freeten 3 pr. pl devour; cf. **freten** AS fretan

freletee: frailty OF frailete

frely: freely

fremde: strange AS fremde

frend sb. friend; cf. **freend**

frendely a. friendly

frendly ad. friendly

frendshipe: friendship AS freondscipe

Frenssh: French

frere: friar OF.

fresche, freshe, fressh: fresh, bright, lively, frank OF fres, f. fresche

fressher a. fresher, brighter

fresshly newe: unwearyingly

fret: gold band, ornament OF frete

freten inf. devour; **freeten** 3 pr. pl.; **frete** pp. AS fretan

freut: fruit OF fruit

freyned pp. asked AS frēgnan

Friday: Venus' day (vendredi)

Frise: Holland, Friesland, country of the Frisians

fro ad. fro Icel frā

fro prep. from

frosche: fresh OF fresche f.

frothen 3 pr. pl. froth, foam Icel froða

fructes: fruits Lat fructum

fructifie: come to fruition, bear fruit Lat.

fructuous: fruitful, full of meat Lat.

frutesteres: fruit-girls

fruyt: fruit, prize

frye inf. fry, burn OF frire

ful a. full; **atte fulle**] completely AS.

ful ad. fully, completely

ful dryve: settled

fulfild pp. filled full: AS fulfyllan

fulle a. full; cf. **ful**

fulliche: fully

fullonge: long

fulsomnesse: over-abundance

fume: the distillation of substance in the body OF fum
fumetere: fumitory, earth-smoke, an herb OF fume-terre
fumositee: fumes (of wine)
furial: dreadful, as by furies oppressed Lat furialis
furie: monster, Fury OF.
furlong wey: a short distance, or time, a while AS furlang
furste: first; cf. firste
further over: moreover
fustian: strong cloth OF fustaine
fuyr: fire AS fȳr n.
fy interj. fie! (with stronger sense than now) F fi!
fyght 3 pr. s. fighteth; cf. fighte
fyle sb. file AS fēol, Merc. fīl f.
fyled pp. filed
fylthe: filth AS fȳlð f.
fyn, fyne sb. end, purpose OF fin
fynaly: once for all
fynch sb. finch, a small bird, a mistress AS finc
fynde a tale: think up something to say; cf. finde
fynder: discoverer
fyne inf. finish (followed by infinitive)
fyne a. fine; fyne of ground] of fine texture OF fīn
fyneste a. finest
fyngerynge: fingering (of strings)
fyngres: fingers AS finger
fynnys: fins AS finn
fynt 3 pr. s. finds; cf. finde
Fynystere: the Cape of Finistere, western France
fyr: fire; pyre A 2914 AS fȳr
fyr: fir; cf. fir
fyr-reed a. fiery-red
fyrst: first
Fyssh: Pisces, a zodiacal sign, the "exaltation" of Venus

G

gabbe: talk idly OF gaber
gadereth 3 pr. s. gathers; gadered, gadrede pt.; cf. Du gaderen
gaf 3 pt. s. gave; cf. yeven
gaitrys berys: "goat-berries," of the buckthorn (Sk.) AS < gātetrēow, goat-tree
galauntyne: a sauce F galantine
galaxye: the Milky Way F galaxie
gale inf. sing out AS galan
galentyne: a sauce for fowl F galantine
Galgopheye: perhaps Gargaphie, where Actæon was turned into a stag
Galianes: "Galeus," probably an (intentional?) error of the Host, who thought Galen, like Hippocrates, must have some medicine named for him
Galice: Galicia, a province in Spain, the seat of the shrine of St. James (Santiago) of Compostella
Galien: Gallienus, emperor of Rome before Claudius II
galle sb. gall; pl. feelings of spleen, discord AS gealla m.
galle sb. sore spot OF galle
galoche: shoe OF.
galon wyn: gallon of wine OF galon
galpyng: gaping, yawning; cf. Du galpen "cry"
galwes: gallows AS galga
Galyen: Galen, a celebrated physician of the second century, whose books were considered for fourteen centuries the highest authority on medicine
galyngale sb. a spice of the cyperus root F galingal
game sb. game, sport, pleasure, jest AS gamen
gamed pt. s. impers. it pleased
gan pt. s. began; cf. ginne
Ganelon: one of the knights of Charlemagne, whose treachery caused the destruction of Roland, Oliver and the rear guard under them
ganeth 3 pr. s. yawns AS gānian
gape inf. gape, yawn; cf. Icel gapa
gappe sb. gap; cf. Icel gap
gapyng p. gaping
gardyn: garden OF gardin
gardynward: direction of the garden
gargat: throat < OF gargate

garleek sb. garlic AS garlēac
garlondes: garlands OF garlande
gastly: ghastly < AS gǣstan
gat: 3 pt. s. begot; cf. gete
gate sb. gate; gatis pl.; cf. Icel gata
gate: 3 pt. s. refl. got; cf. gete
Gatesden: John Gatisden, physician at Oxford in fourteenth century, court-doctor of Edward II
gat-tothed a. gap-toothed, with teeth set wide apart < Icel gat "hole"(?)
gaude sb. deceit, graft; cf. OF gaudir "rejoice"
gaude grene: light or yellowish green F gaude "weld" a plant for dyeing
gauded pp. ornamented with gawdies, which were the larger beads in the set, marking the Paternosters
Gaufred: Geoffrey de Vinsauf, mediæval scholar, wrote "Nova Poetria" shortly after the death of Richard I, with original models, in bombastic and turgid style. One poem bewailed Richard's death: "O Veneris lacrimosa dies," etc.
Gaunt: Ghent, city in Flanders, a center of cloth-making
gauren inf. stare
Gawayn: Sir Gawain, nephew and bravest knight of King Arthur in older tales
Gawle: Chaucer translates "Galli" as folk of Gawle, The Gauls
gay: gay, gaudy in dress F gai
gayler: jailer OF geolier
gayne: benefit Icel gagn
gayneth pr. s. impers. gains
Gazan: acc. of Gaza, a city on the plain of Philistia, south of Jaffa
geaunt: giant OF geant
geere: clothes, garb, equipment; cf. AS gearwe, Icel gervi
geere: inconstant behavior orig. uncert.
gees pl. geese AS gōs, pl. gēs
geeste: geste, story of adventure; pl. Gesta Romanorum, a mediæval book of anecdotes OF geste "history"
geestours: gestours, tellers of tales or gestes
gelde inf. castrate
gelous: jealous OF gelos
gemmes, gemmys: gems, jewels F gemme
Genelloun: Ganelon, one of Charlemagne's officers, who betrayed the rear-guard of Charlemagne's army as it passed over the Pyrenees. The entire rear guard, including Roland and Oliver, was destroyed at Roncesvalles. Ganelon was punished by being torn to pieces by horses
generalle: liberal, broadly sympathetic OF general
gent a. elegant OF.
genterye: gentleness, noble birth, "gentilesse" OF genterise
gentil: gentle, noble, well-bred OF.
gentilesse: gentleness, nobility OF.
gentilleste: noblest, most delicate
gentilly: gently, honourably
gentilman: gentleman
gentils sb. pl. nobility OF.
gentrye: nobility; cf. genterye
Genyloun: Ganelon, of Brittany; cf. Genelloun
geometrie: geometry OF.
gerdonyng: guerdoning, reward OF guerdoner
gerdoun: guerdon, recompence OF guerdon
gere sb. equipment; cf. geere
gereful: changeable
geres pl. behaviors; cf. geere
gerland: cf. garland
Gernade: Granada, in Spain
gerner sb. garner OF gernier
Gerounde: Gironde, a river on west coast of France
gery: changeable; cf. geere
gesse 1 pr. s. guess, think; cf. Dan gissa
gest: guest AS.
gete inf. get, gain, regain, beget; gate 3 pt. s. refl.; gat 3 pt. s.; cf. Icel geta, AS gitan
gethe 3 pr. s. goes; cf. gon
geven pp. given; cf. yive
gide sb. guide F guide
giggynge p. fitting; the "guige,"

or leather strap by which a knight's shield was slung OF guige

Gilbertyn: perhaps Gilbertus Anglicus

gilde: golden AS gyldan

gile: guile OF.

gilt: guilt AS gylt "crime"

gilte: golden

giltelees: guiltless

gilty a. guilty

ginne inf. begin, attempt; **gan** pt. s.; **gonne, gunne** 3 pt. pl. < AS beginnan

gipser sb. pouch, wallet F gibeciere

girdel sb. girdle AS gyrdel

girden: strike orig. uncert.

girles pl. youth of either sex AS gyrl(?)

girt 3 pt. s., pp. girdled AS gyrdan

gise: guise, fashion, dress OF guise

glad, glade: glad, merry; pl. bright, sparkling AS glæd

gladde, glade inf. make glad, comfort; **gladeth** imp. pl. AS gladian

glader: one who makes glad

gladly: usually; willingly

gladnesse: gladness, joy; wel sette gladnesse] seemly or becoming joy

gladsom: pleasant

glarynge: glaring, staring

glas: glass AS glæs n.

glasynge: glasswork

gledy: burning AS glēd, "a coal"

glee: entertainment AS glēo

gleede: glowing coal, fire AS glēd f.

glem sb. gleam AS glǣm m.

gliterynge: glittering

glood 3 pt. s. glided; cf. **glyde**

glorie: glory OF glorie

glose sb. interpretation, commentary, hence margin of book; cf. text F glose

glosen inf. gloze, interpret texts, flatter, cajole F gloser

glotenye: gluttony OF glotence

glotoun: glutton F glouton

gloweden 3 pt. pl. glowed AS glōwan

glowynge p. glowing, shining

glyde inf. glide, ascend; **glood** 3 pt. s. AS glīdan

glyteren 3 pr. pl. glitter; **glytered** 3 pt. s.

gnawynge p. gnawing, champing AS gnagan

gnodded 3 pl. pt. rubbed; cf. AS gnīdan

gnow 3 pt. s. gnawed

gobet sb. section, fragment F gobet

Goddesse: goddess AS god

Goddis poss. s. God's; pl. Gods

godelyhede s. goodliness

godenesse, godnesse: goodness

godhede: divinity

gold, golde s. gold AS gold n.

gold-bete pp. covered with beaten gold

goldene: golden

gold-hewen: hewn of gold

goldryng: gold ring

goldsmythrye: goldsmith's work

gold-threed: gold thread

gole: mouthful of words, cackle F golee

golet: throat, gullet OF goulet

goliardeys sb. buffoon, teller of coarse jests

Golias: Goliath, giant slain by David

gomme: gum OF.

gon inf. go; **goo** 1 pr. s.; **goost** 2 pr. s.; **gethe, goth** 3 pr. s.; **goon** 2 pr. pl.; **go** imp; **goynge** p.; **go, goon** pp.; **go bet**] go as quickly as possible AS gān

gonne sb. gun orig. uncert.

gonne 3 pt. pl. began; cf. **ginne**

good sb. goods, property; by his propre good] within his own income AS gōd

goode sb. good

goode a. good

goodely: goodly, kindly

goodenesse: goodness

goodlich: goodly

goodlieste: goodliest

gooldes: marigolds

goon inf. go; cf. **gon**; goon with childe] pregnant; goon a blake-

beryed] go a blackberrying, wandering; up goon the trompes] the trumpets sound

goon is: ago

goore: a gore, part of a garment, met. for the garment; under my goore] within my garment AS gāra m.

goos: goose AS gōs

goost sb. ghost, spirit; Holy Ghost AS gāst m.

goost biforn: anticipatest; cf. gon

goot: goat AS gāt m.

Gootland: Gotland, an island in the Baltic Sea

goshauk: goshawk AS gōshafuc

gosis: poss. goose's

gossib: friend, gossip AS godsibb "God-relative." i.e. by baptismal sponsorship

gossomer: gossamer, thin fabric

gost: spirit; cf. goost

goth 3 pr. s.; goes; cf. gon

gourde: gourd, drinking vessel OF gourde

goute: gout OF goutte

governaille: control, rule OF gouvernail "rudder"

governaunce: method of management, control, self-control OF.

governed 3 pt. s. governed; **governeth** 2 imp. pl. OF governer

governeresse: governess, mistress, ruler OF.

governour: ruler, umpire OF.

governyng sb. control, guardianship

gowne: gown OF gone

goynge p. going; cf. gon

grace: grace, favor, help, mercy, lot; his lady grace] his lady's favor OF.

grame: harm, misery AS grama

grammeere: grammar OF grammaire

grapenel: grapnel, grappling iron diminutive of OF grapin "hook"

gras: grace

gras: grass AS græs

gras-tyme: the summer, when a horse can get grass in the fields

Graunsome: Sir Oto de Graunson, knight of Savoy, in the pay of Richard II

graunt sb. grant, privilege OF graunter

graunt mercy of: great thanks for

graunten inf. grant; **grauntith** imp. s.

grauntyng sb. granting, grant

graven inf. carve, dig, bury AS grafan

grayn: dye term; in grayn] a fast color, made from the grain, or kermes F grain

Grece: Greece

grece sb. grease F graisse

gree: good part; in gree] in goodwill F gre

gree: rank, superiority OF gre

greet, greete a. great, splendid; the greete] the important part AS grēat

Greke: Greek; **Grekes** poss.

grene: green, usual color for archers AS grēne

grenehede: youthful folly

Grenewych: Greenwich, Chaucer's home, below Deptford

gres: grass AS græs

gresly: grisly, fearsome AS grislic

gret, grete: great; cf. **greete**

Grete See: the Mediterranean

gretenesse: greatness, size

grette pt. s. greeted AS grētan

gretter: greater

gretteste: greatest

grevaunce: grievance, trouble F grevance

greve inf. grieve, trouble OF grever

greve sb. grove AS grāf f.

grevosly: grievously

grevous: grievous

grew pt. pl. grew; cf. **growe**

greye: grey AS græg

greyn: grain OF grain

griffon: griffin, fabulous beast, half lion, half eagle OF.

Grisil: Grisel, name for a gray horse

Grisildis: Griselda

grisly: horrible, awful AS grislic

grobbe inf. grub orig. uncert.

grond: 3 pt. s. ground AS grindan

gronte 3 pt. s. groaned AS grānian
grope inf. test, feel AS grōpian
grot: atom, particle AS grot
grot: groat, small coin ODu groot
grounded pp. well versed in
growe inf. grow; grew pt. pl. AS grōwan
groynynge: murmuring of discontent
grucche inf. grumble; grucchen pr. pl. OF grouchier
gruf ad. groveling, on his face; cf. grovel
grym, grymme: grim, fierce AS grim
grynt 3 pr. s. grindeth
grys sb. an expensive grey fur, very stylish at this time OF gris
grysely: horrible
gunne 3 pl. pt. began; cf. ginne
guy imp. pl. guide; cf. gye OF gui
gyde sb. guide
gyden inf. guide, conduct
gye inf. guide, lead; guy imp. pl.
gyle: guile, deceit OF.
gyn: machine, device OF engin
gyngebreed: ginger bread OF gingebras
gynglen inf. jingle. Bridles were often decorated with small bells
gypoun: a doublet, tunic OF jupon
gyse: manner, custom OF guise
gyterne: kind of guitar OF guiterne
gytes pl. mantel; cf. OF guite "hat"

H

haberdasshere sb. haberdasher, merchant of hats, or of pins, buttons, etc.; cf. AF hapertas
habergeoun: a short hauberk, or coat-of-mail OF haubergeon
habitacioun: habitation OF habitation
habounde inf. abound F abonder
Habradate: Abradates, king of Susi
habundance: abundance
habundant: abundant
habundantly: abundantly
hachis: hatches AS hæcc f.
haddist 3 pt. s. hadst; haddyn 3 pt. pl.; cf. have
haire: hair-shirt AS hǣr f.
hakeney: hackney; cf. OF haquenee, and Hackney
hakke inf. hack AS haccian
haldist 2 pr. s. holdest; cf. holde
hale inf. draw; cf. AS geholian
half wey pryme: 7.30, half way from 6 to 9
halfe sb. side, behalf; a goddes halfe] in God's name AS healf
halfe a. half
halfe word: equivocation
halke: hiding-place
hallis: halls AS heal
hals: neck; (acc. of reference) AS heals
halse 1 pr. s. conjure AS healsian
halt 3 pr. s. holds; cf. holde
halte a. lame AS healt
halwed pp. blessed AS hālgian
halwes pl. saints, used to denote saint's shrines; halwes twelve] the twelve disciples of Christ AS hālig "holy"
Haly: Arabian physician of eleventh century
halyday: holyday
hamer sb. hammer AS hamer
han inf., 3 pr. pl. have; cf. have AS hablem
handes pl. hands AS hand m.
hangyn inf. hang; hongeth 3 pr. s.; heeng, heng, henge pt. s., pl.; honge 3 pt. pl.; hyng 3 pt. s. AS hongion
Hanybal: Hannibal, Carthaginian general, defeated Rome at Placentia, Lake Trasimenus, and Cannæ, B. C. 218-217
happe sb. chance, luck, good fortune; cf. Icel happ
happe, happyn inf. happen, occur; happith 3 pr. s.; happed, happede 3 pt. s.
harde: hard; harde grace] misery AS heard
harde pp. heard; cf. here
hardely, hardily: certainly, surely

hardinesse: boldness
hardnesse: cruelty
hardy: strong, brave F hardi
hardyng: hardening
harlotrye: ribaldry; pl. ribald jests OF.
harme s. harm, injury, evil AS hearm
harmeful: harmful, evil
harneised pp. equipped, decorated OF harneschier
harneys: armor F harnais
harome: harm; cf. harme
harpe sb. harp AS hearpe
harpyng sb. playing upon the harp
harre sb. hinge AS heorra
harrow! interj. alas!
hart: heart; cf. herte
hartely: heartily, truly
haryed pp. dragged along AS hergian "ravage"
hasard: gambling OF.
hasardour: gamester
hasardrye: dicing, gaming
Hasdrubales: Hasdrubal, a Carthaginian general
hasel: hazel-tree AS hæsel
hastely: hastily
hastif: hasty OF hasti
hastifliche: hastily
hastiliche: hastily
hastou, hastow 2 pr. s. hast thou; cf. have
hate sb. hatred AS hete m.
hate 1 pr. s. hate AS hatian
hath 3 pr. s. has, there is; cf. have
haubergeoun: coat of mail; cf. habergeoun
hauberke: coat of mail OF hauberc
hauk sb. hawk AS hafoc
hauke inf. hawk, hunt with the hawk
haukyng: hawking
haunt: abode, region; practice, skill; dictrict covered by one man OF hanter
haunteth 3 pr. s. makes a practice of
hautayn, hauteyn: proud, high-sounding F hautain
have, han, havyn inf. have, keep; **hastow** 2 pr. s. hast thou; **hath** 3 pr. s.; **han** 3 pr. pl; **haddist** 2 pt. s.; **haddyn** 3 pt. pl.; **have** 3 pr. s. subj. AS habben
haven: port
havyn inf. have; cf. have
hawberk: hauberk OF hauberc
hawe: haw, fruit of dog-rose AS haga
hawebake: a baked haw, husk for a famished man; hence, plain food
hawethorn: hawthorn AS haga-þorn
hayl sb. hail AS hægel
hayle inf. hail
Hayles: Hailes, in Gloucester
he . . . he . . . he used as dem. pron. this one, that one, another, etc.
healle inf. heal; **heeled** pp. AS hælan
Hebrayk a. Hebraic, Hebrew
hed, hede, heed: head AS heafod n.
heede sb. heed AS hēdan
heeld 3 pt. s. held; cf. holde
heele sb. health AS hælu f.
heelp inf. help; cf. helpe
heeng 3 pt. s., pl. hanged; cf. hangyn
heep sb. heap, crowd, lot AS hēap
heer sb. hair; **heeris** pl. AS hær
heer ad. here AS hēr
heer-biforn: heretofore
heere inf. hear; cf. here
heerforth: in this direction
heerupon: hereupon
heeste: command AS hæs f.
heete 3 pr. s. promise; cf. hete
heete sb. vow; cf. AS gehāt
heeth sb. heath, field AS hæð
hegges: hedges; cf. AS hege m.
heigh, heih a. high; in heigh and lough] under all circumstances, completely AS hēah
heigh, heighe ad. high
hel, helle: Hades, Hell, torment AS hell
helde inf. hold; pt. s. held; cf. holde AS healdan
hele sb. health, well-being AS hælu
hele inf. conceal AS helan
hele inf. heal AS hælan

helme: helmet AS.
helmed pp. protected by a helmet OF < AS.
Helowys: Heloise, wife of Abelard, great teacher of XIIth century, retired to a convent
helpe s. help, aid; **do helpe**] aid, assist AS help
helpe, heelp inf. help, assist; **heelp** 3 pt. s.; **helpe** 3 pr. s. subj., imp.; **holpen** pp. AS helpan
helplees: helpless
hem: them
hende: courteous, gentle AS gehenda "near"
heng, henge 3 pt. s., pl. hanged; cf. **hangyn**
henne: hence AS heona, hine
hente inf. acquire, seize, grip; **hente** pt. s.; **hent** pp. AS henton
hepe: hip; fruit of the dog-rose AS hēope
hepe: heap, number; cf. **heep**
her: hair AS hǣr
heraud: herald OF.
herbe yve: herb ivy, ground-pine
herbergage: lodging, furnishing, lodgings OF.
herbergeours: purveyors of lodging
herberwe: harbor, inn, position in the ecliptic; cf. Icel herbergi
herberwynge: harboring
Hercules: son of Zeus and Alcmene
herd: hard
herde sb. herdsman AS hierde
herde 3 pt. s. heard; cf. **here**
here sb. hair AS hǣr
here: their
here, heere inf. hear; **herde** 3 pt. s.; **harde, herd, herde** pp.; **heere** 2 imp. s. AS hēran
herebefore, herebeforne: previously, a while ago
Herenus: the Erinnys, or Fates
Hereos (med.) the malady of love
herieth 3 pr. s. praises; **heryen** 3 pr. pl.; **heryed** pp. AS herian
heris pl. hair, hairs; cf. **here**
herith 3 pr. s. hears; cf. **here**
heriynge sb. praise
herkene, herkne inf. listen, harken; **herkenyth, herkneth** imp. AS hercnian
Hermanno: really Herennianus, son of Zenobia
Hermengyld: Ermengild
Hermyon: Hermione
herne: corner, nook AS hyrne
Herodes s., pl. Herod; Herod ordered the slaughter of the Innocents in Bethlehem; cf. Matt. ii. 16
heronsewes: heronsaw, hernsaw, heron OF heronceau
heroun: heron OF heron
Herro: Hero, beloved of Leander at Sestos
Herry: Harry
herse: hearse, in the sense of bier, or of a body lying in state OF herce
hert: hart, stag AS heort
herte sb. heart AS heorte
herte 3 pt. s. hurt OF heurter
herte-blood: heart's blood
hertely a. hearty
hertely ad. sincerely, cordially
herte-roote: "bottom of one's heart"
herte-spoon: breast-bone
herye 3 pr. pl. praise; cf. **herieth** AS herian
herytage: heritage OF heritage
heste: behest, command AS hǣs
Hester: Esther, queen of Ahasuerus; cf. the Book of Esther
hete sb. heat AS hǣtu f.
hete inf. promise, be named; **het, heete, hete, highte** pr. s.; **het, hete, hight** pt.; **hyght** pp.
heterly: fiercely; cf. Low Ger hetter "irritating"
hethen sb. heathen; another **hethen**] a different heathen from AS hǣðen
Hethenesse: heathen lands
hette 3 pt. s. heated AS hǣtan
heve inf. heave, lift AS hebban
hevedes, hevedis: heads AS heafod
heven, hevene: heaven; **hevene and lia**] heaven (coelum) and Leah (the busy wife); **hevene of people**] < coelum + leos (gr. people); **hevenes lilie**] < coeli lilia, fanciful etymologies for Cecilia AS heofon m.
hevenelyche: heavenly

hevenysh: heavenly, of the heavenly bodies
hevyness: heaviness, despondency, sorrow AS hefige
hewe: hue, color, complexion AS hēow n.
hewed a. hued
hewen inf. cut, hew AS hēawan
hey: hay AS hēg
heyest: highest
heye-weye: highway
heyre-clowt: hair-cloth AS clūt m.
heyres: heirs OF heir
heysoge: hedge-sparrow, "hay-suck"
hider ad. hither AS.
hidouse: hideous OF hidous
hidously: hideously
hie ad. high AS hēah
hierde: shepherd AS hierde m.
high: in a high pitch
highte 3 pr. s. was named; cf. **hete**
hil: hill AS hyll m.
hipes, hypes sb. pl. hips AS hype m.
hir pers. pron., dat. and acc. to her, her
hir, hire poss. her, their
hires: her
hise: his
historial: historic
hit pron. it
hitte pt. s. hit; cf. Icel hitta
ho: who AS hwā
hod: hood AS hōd
Hogge: Hodge, nickname for Roger
hogges poss. hog's AS hogga
hoke: hook AS hōc m.
hold, holde inf., 1 pr. s. hold, keep, possess, consider; **haldist** 2 pr. s.; **halt, halte** 3 pr. s.; **heeld, helde** 3 pt. s.; **hoold** imp.; **holde** pp. AS healdan
hole sb. hole, hollow AS hol n.
hole a. all AS hāl
holly: wholly, entirely
holm: oak (evergreen) AS holen(?)
holour: lecher OF holier
holpen pp. helped; cf. **helpe**
holsum: wholesome
holt: grove AS holt n.
holwe a. hollow AS holh
holy: wholly, entirely
holyday: holy day, holiday
hom: whom
homage: homage; did homage] acknowledged as lord OF.
hom-comynge; cf. **hoom-comynge**
homward: homeward
homycide: murderer OF homicide
hond, honde s. hand, oath; of hir hond] of arms AS hand f.
hondred: hundred AS hundred
honeste, honestee, honestetee sb. honesty, decency OF honeste
honeste a. honorable, decent OF.
honge 3 pt. pl. hanged; cf. **hangyn**
hongeth 3 pr. s. hangs; cf. **hangyn**
honneure inf. honor; **honoureth** 3 pr. s.; **honouren** 3 pr. pl. subj.; **honured** pp. OF honourer
honouren pl. s.; cf. **honneure**
honurable: honorable
hony: honey AS hunig
hoode sb. hood AS hōd
hoodeles: hoodless, unprotected from weather
hool a. whole, well, entire AS hōl
hoold sb. castle; cf. AS heald
hoold imp. hold; cf. **holde**
hoole sb. hole
hoole ad. wholly
hooly a. holy
hooly ad. wholly, entirely
hoolynesse: holiness
hoom ad. home AS hām m.
hoom-comynge: home-coming
hoomely, hoomly: simply, unostentatiously
hoor: hoary AS hār
hoord: hoard, treasure AS hord
hoot, hoote a. hot; cf. humour AS hāt
hoote ad. hotly
hoppen 1 pr. pl. dance AS hoppian
hoppesteres a. dancing
horde sb. hoard, much money AS hord n. m.
hore: grayhaired AS hār
Hornchild: King Horn, or Horn

Childe, a Middle English metrical romance

horne: horn, bugle; drinking horn AS horn m.

horowe: foul AS horig

hors: horse AS.

horse a. hoarse AS hās

horsly: horselike, thoroughbred

hosen pl. hose AS hose

hostelrye: inn OF hostelerie

hostileer: inn-keeper OF hostelier

hote: hot; fote hote] foot hot, right away, hastily AS hāt

hou: how

houndes, houndys pl. hounds AS hund

houres: hours; kepte in houres] treated him according to the astrological hours; watched for times when the planets were in the proper position for favorable treatment OF hore

hous sb. house; one of the 12 parts of the zodiacal circle; derkeste hous] Scorpio (Sk.); Hous of Fame] The House of Fame, poem by Chaucer AS hūs

housbond: husband Icel hūsbōndi

housbondrie: economy

houses of office: servants' quarters

housholdere: householder

how! interj. ho!

how, howe ad. how, in what manner

how: however

howped pt. pl. whooped OF houper

howve: hood; sette his howve] make him look foolish AS hūfe

huge: great; cf. OF ahuge

Hugelyn of Pyze: Ugolino of Pisa, slain July, 1288

Hugh of Lyncoln: Hugh of Lincoln, a boy of eight, was supposed to have been murdered by Jews at Lincoln in 1255

Hulle: Hull, seaport on east coast of England

humanitee: kindness F.

humblely: humbly

humblesse: humbleness

humour sb. element or quality. Ancient medicine was based upon Galen's idea of the four elements: earth, air, fire, and water, and the four humours or qualities: hot, cold, dry, moist. A man's temperament depended upon the combinations of these qualities. Sickness was supposed to result from an excess of one or more of these. Each part of the body could be affected; thus the liver might have an excess of hot, or of dry, or of both OF humor

humylitee: humility

hunderede: hundred

hungir: hunger AS hungor

hunte sb. huntsman; **huntys** pl. AS hunta m.

hunten inf. hunt AS huntian

huntere: hunter

hunteresse: huntress

huntynge: hunting

hurte 3 pt. s. hurt; cf. OF hurter

hurtelyn 3 pr. pl hurtle, drive, dash; **hurtleth** 3 pr. s. < "hurt" + frequentative -le

hurtes pl. hurts

hust pp. hushed

huwes sb. color AS hiw

hy, hye a. lofty

hyde inf. hide; **hydestow** 2 pr. s. AS hȳdan

hyderward: in this direction

hye sb. haste < AS hīgian

hye inf. hasten, hie; imp.; **hyed** pt. pl. AS hīgian

hyene: hyena, the gall of which was a cure for weak eyes OF.

hyer a. higher, upper; hadde the hyer hond] gained the victory

hyeste: highest

hyeweye: highway

hyght pp. called; cf. **hete**

hylde pt. s. bent AS hyldan

hym dat. of reference

hynd: hind, doe AS hind f.

hyndre inf. hinder, interfere with AS hindrian

hyndreste a. hindermost

hyne sb. hind, farm-hand AS hīna m.

hyng 3 pt. s. hung; cf. **hangyn**

hypes: hips AS hype

hyre sb. hire, pay; sette to hyre] sub-let to another AS hȳrian

hyre: their

hyred pp. hired

I

I, ik pers. pron. I; common prefix of pp.; cf. Y

ibenched: couched < AS benc

iboundyn pp. bound AS bunden

ibroke pp. broken AS brocen

ibroudede: embroidered OF broude

icorounede pp. crowned OF.

ido pp. done, ended; cf. **don**

Idus: Ides, 15 March Lat.

ifounded pp. founded, set AS fundian

ignoraunce: ignorance OF.

i-halowed: view-hallooed (of hert) OF halloer

ik pers. pron. I

iknyt pp. knit, bound AS cnyttan

ilke: same, very AS ilca

illusioun: illusion OF.

iloryn pp. lost AS loren < leosan

Ilyoun: Ilion or Ilium, the Greek name for Troy, is used by Chaucer as though it were not the same place. This is probably because in Guido delle Colonne Ilion is used as the name of the citadel of Troy

imaginacioun: imagination OF.

imakid pp. made AS macod < macian

impertinent: not appertaining OF.

importable: unendurable OF.

impressioun: remembrance OF.

in sb. inn AS inn, in

in conseil: secretly OF.

In principio: The friars constantly quoted the text, "In principio erat verbum," "in the beginning was the word," John i. 1, as they went from house to house

In principio mulier est hominis confusio: Woman, from the beginning, has been man's ruin (Vincent of Beauvais, Speculum Historiale X. 71)

in the gilt: at fault

inclinacioun: inclination, tendency due to natal star OF.

incubus: sprite, fiend Lat.

Inde: India OF.

indulgence: permission OF.

inequal: unequal; houre inequal] the astrological hours varied with the time of year, the period of daylight being always divided into twelve hours Lat inæqualis

infect a. invalid A 320 The sergeant could clear up any tangles or limitations in the title, and transfer the property in fee simple Lat.

infecte inf. infect Lat infectus

infeere a. together in + AS gefera

infortunat a. carrying misfortune Lat infortunatus

infortune: misfortune OF.

iniquitee sb. evil OF.

inmortal: immortal OF.

inne prep. in

inned pp. provided inns, lodged

Innocent III: 1161-1216, Pope

inome pp. taken AS genomen

inow, inowh: enough AS genōh

inportable: insufferable, unbearable OF.

inpossible: sb. an impossibility OF.

inquisityf: inquisitive OF.

inspired pp. filled with life or animation OF inspirer

instreumentis: instruments OF instrument

instrument: musical instrument

intresse: interest, concern Lat interesse "usury"

inwith: within

ipeyntede pp. painted OF peint < peindre

iren: iron

Isaude: Isolt, Iseult, Isolde; cf. Tristram

istede: instead

istrike pp. struck AS gestricen < strīcan

isworn pp. sworn AS gesworen < swerian

itawght pp. taught AS getāht < tæcan

ithewid a. or pp. trained, accustomed AS þēaw "manner"
iwaxe pp. become AS weaxan
iwounde pp. wounded AS gewundod
iwreten, iwretyn pp. written AS gewriten < wrītan
iwroken pp. avenged AS gewrocen < wrecan
iwrought, iwrowht pp. wrought AS gewocht < wircan

J

jade: poor horse; cf. Icel jada "mare"
Jakke of Dovere: Jack of Dover, probaby a warmed-over pastry
Jakke Straw: Jack Straw, leader of riots in London (1381)
jalous, jalowse: jealous (fol. by over) OF jalous
jalousie: jealousy OF.
jambeux: plates to protect the shins OF.
Jame: James, at whose shrine the Wife had been as pilgrim
jane: a small silver coin of Genoa, whence the name
Janekyn: Jenkin
jangelynge: jangling, chattering OF jangler
jangle 3 pr. pl. chatter; jangleth 2 pr. s.
janglere: noisy fellow, chatterer
jangleresse: loose talker
janglyng: disputing
Jankyn: Johnny; priests were called Sir John
Janus: Bifrons, the Roman god of beginnings, two-faced
jape sb. trick, jest OF.
jape inf. jest, play tricks; japed pp. tricked
Jason: the leader of the Argonauts in the quest for the Golden Fleece, which he gained by the aid of Medea, q. v.
jay: a bird which can be taught a few words OF jai
Jay tout perdu mon temps et mon labour: I have lost my time and my pains
jeet: jet OF jet
jelosye: jealousy OF.
jelous: jealous OF jalous
Jepte: Jephthah, judge of Israel; (cf. Book of Judges xi)
Jeremye: Jeremiah (iv)
Jerome: "Adversus Jovinianum" Libri II, a Latin work of St. Jerome (d. 420), directed against a monk who held widows and married women equal in grace with virgins
jet: fashion; newe jet] latest style OF get
jeupardyes pl. jeopardies, dangers; problems in chess, situations or positions of chess men OF jeu parti "a game with even chances"
jeweles pl. jewels OF juel
Jewerye: Jewry, Jewish quarter
Jewes poss. pl. Jews'; Jewes work] perhaps damascened work, or inlaid work
Jobes: Job's
Joce: St. Josse, confused by the wife with Sir Joce, whose treatment of his wife deserved and received a reward similar to that of the Wife; (cf. Jean de Meung, "Testament," 461 f. Skeat)
jocunde: merry Lat jocundus
jogelours: jugglers OF jogleor
jogelrye: act of jugglery OF.
John: the Nun's Priest
joie: joy OF.
jolif: jolly OF.
jolitee: enjoyment, comfort, fun OF.
joly: pretty, merry OF.
jolyer: more handsome
jolynesse: merriment
jolyte: jollity
Jon: John
Jonas: Jonah
Jonathas: Jonathan
Joseph: son of Jacob, gained a high position in Egypt through his interpretation of Pharaoh's dream of the seven lean kine which devoured the seven fat kine. Cf. Genesis xl. 41
journee: day's march OF.
Jovinian: object of Jerome's attack in his treatise "Adv. Jovinianum"; cf. Jerome

joye: joy
joynant a. adjoining OF joignant
joyned pt. s. joined, let touch OF joindre
Jubaltar: Gibraltar
Judicum: the Book "of Judges" Lat (gen. pl. used)
Judith: Judith of Bethulia, slew Holofernes, captain of the host, and saved her people. Cf. the "Book of Judith," in the "Apocrypha"
jueles: jewels OF juel
juge sb. judge OF.
juge 1 pr. s. judge
juggement: judgment, decision OF.
Julius: Julius Cæsar
Juno: the consort of Jove, and queen of Olympus
jupartie: jeopardy OF jeu parti "game with even chances"
juste inf. joust, fight in tournament OF jouster
justes pl. as s. tournament OF justes
justise sb. judge; administration of justice
Juvenal: satirist of later Roman empire
juwise, juyse: judgment, sentence OF juise

K

kable: rope OF cable
kaityf: villain OF caitif
kakelynge: cackling
kalkuled: calculated OF calculer
kan pr. s., pl. know, knows, can; cf. konne AS can
kanstow 2 pr. s. canst thou; cf. konne
karf 3 pt. s. cleft AS ceorfan
katapuce: caper-spurge F catapuce
kaught pt. s., pl. caught; cf. cacche. OF cachier
Kaukasous: Caucasus, mountains between Caspian and Black Seas
kaute pp. caught; cf. cacche
kaves: caves OF.
kaynard: sluggard, fool OF cagnard
Kayrrud: "Red Town," an unknown place in Brittany Celt Kerr (town) + rud (red)
keen: cows AS cū; pl. cȳ, cȳe, gen. cȳna
keene: bold AS cēne
keep sb. notice, heed; take keep] pay heed to AS cēpan
kembd pp. combed AS camb
kempe: coarse (of hair) (? AS cempa "champion")
kempt pp. combed
ken: kin, men; al ken] all men, mankind AS cynn
kende pp. know, discern; cf. konne
kene a. keen, sharp AS cēne
kene ad. keenly
Keneln: king of Mercia in the ninth century, murdered as a child
kep, kepe sb. heed; take kepe] observe; cf. keep
kepe inf. take care of, keep; good to kepe] worth returning to, or sticking to
kepere sb. ruler, prior
kept pp. protected; from pirates or privateers
kepynge p. pr. keeping; cf. kepe
kertelis: kirtles, frock AS cyrtel
kerve inf. cut; korven, korvyn pp. AS ceorfan
kervere: carver
kervyng sb. carving
kesse inf. kiss; keste 3 pt. s. AS cyssan
keverede pp. covered OF covrir
keye: key AS cǣg f.
kichenes: kitchens AS cycene
kike inf. kick orig. unkn.
kind, kinde sb. . nature AS cynd fn.
king: king AS cyning
kisse inf. kiss; kys 2 imp. s.; kist pp. AS cysson
kitte 3 pt. s. cut; cf. kutte
knakkes pl. tricks
knarre sb. knot, knotty muscled fellow; cf. LG knarre
knarry a. gnarled
knave: boy, servant; knave-child] male child AS cnafa
knavyssh: knavish
kneled 3 pt. s. knelt AS cnēowlian

knelynge: kneeling
knette inf. bind; knet pp.; cf. knytte
knewe, knewh pt. s., pl., pt. s. subj. knew; cf. knowen
knight of the shire: the representative in Parliament of the county at large
knobbes pl. blotches; cf. LG knobbe
knokkeden 3 pt. pl. knocked AS cnocian
knotte sb. knot AS cnotta
knowen inf. know; knowestow 2 pr. s.; knowe pp. AS cnāwan
knowes: knees AS cnēow n.
knowlachynge: knowing, knowledge
knowynge s. knowledge
knyf: knife, dagger AS cnīf
knyghte: knight
knyghthod, knyghthede: knighthood
knytte inf. knit; knyttest 3 pr. s. puttest thyself in conjunction (in astronomical sign) B 306; knyt pp. AS cnyttan
kok: cock AS coc
kon imp. acknowledge; cf. konne
konne inf. be able, know how, know; kan pr. s., pl.; kanstow 2 pr. s.; konne 2 pr. s.; koude, kouthe pt.; kende, kouth, kowthe pp. AS cunnan, pr. cann
konnyng: skill
konnyngly: skillfully
korven, korvyn pp. carved, cut; cf. kerve
koude pt. knew, could; cf. konne
kouth pp. known; cf. konne
kouthe pt. could, knew how; cf. konne
kowthe pp. well known; cf. konne
kunnynge: cunning, skillful
kutte inf. cut; kitte 3 pt. s.; kut pp.; orig. unkn.
kyd pp. disclosed AS cȳðan
kylle inf. kill; cf. AS cwellan
kynde sb. nature, species; by kynde] according to its natural function; by wey of kynde] in the course of nature AS gecynd fm.
kynde a. kind
kyndely ad. naturally
kyndely a. natural, kindly
kyndenesse: kindness
kyndled pp. kindles; cf. Icel kynda
kyngis poss. king's
kynrede sb. kindred, family AS cynn "race" + rǣden "rule"
kys 2 imp. s. kiss; cf. kisse
kyte: kite, bird of prey AS cȳta
kythe inf. disclose, show; kytheth 3 pr. s.; kyd pp. AS ȳðan

L

laas, las: lace, cord, snare OF laz
labbyng: blabbing, babbling; cf. Du labben
laboure inf. labor OF labour
Lacedomya: Laodamia
Lacedomye: Lacedæmonia, Sparta
lacerte: muscle OF.
lacynge: lacing
lad pp. led; cf. lede
ladde 3 pt. s., pl. took, led; cf. lede
ladel: ladle AS hlædel
ladi: lady AS hlǣfdie
ladishippe: ladyship
lady: lady; poss. lady's
lafte 3 pt. s.; pp. neglected, ceased; cf. leve
lak, lakke sb. lack, defect; cf. Dan lak "slander"
lake: linen; cf. G laken
lakketh pr. s. lacks; lakked pt.; cf. lak
lambyssh: lamb-like
Lamek, Lamekys poss. Lamech, the first practicer of polygamy. Genesis iv. and v. He was the father of Jubal and Jubal-Cain; cf. Tuballe
Lamedon: Laomedon, father of King Priam of Troy
lamentacioun: lamentation OF.
Lameth: Lamech
Lamwel: Lemuel, the king (Proverbs xxxi. 1)
langage sb. language; fair langage] flattery OF.
langour: pain, torment OF.
langwissheth 3 pr. s. languishes; langwissing p. OF languir

languyssynge pr. p. languishing
lanterne: lantern OF.
Laodomya: Laodamia, wife of Protesilaus, chose to die with him
lappe sb. lap, fold of garment, wrapper AS læppa
lappeth: embraceth
lapwynge: lapwing AS hlēapewince
large a. free, generous; at his large] at liberty OF.
large ad. freely
largesse: generosity, nobility OF.
larke: lark AS lāwerce
las: leash, net, snare OF laz
lasch sb. lash; cf. Du lasch
lasse a. less; lasse and moore] both smaller and greater AS lǣssa
lasse ad. less
last pl. loads; last quade yeer] wagon-load of bad years AS hlæst
last, laste inf., 3 pr. s.; 3 pt. s., pl. last, endure; lasteth 3 pr. s. AS lǣstan
lat imp. allow; cf. lette
laten blood pp. let blood, drained off the gravy, that it might keep longer; cf. lette
laton, latoun: latten, a brass alloy OF laton
Latumyus: friend of Arrius
Latyn, Latyne sb. Latin
laude sb. praise F laude
laughe inf. laugh; lough 3 pt. s.; laughan pp. AS hlehhan
launcegay: a kind of lance OF lanegaie
Launcelet: Sir Launcelot, chief knight in Arthur's court
launde: clearing, dale OF lande
laurer, laurier: laurel OF laurier
lauriat: laureate, crowned with laurel Lat laureatus
lavender: laundress OF lavandier
lavours: lavers, basins OF laveoir
Lavyne: Lavinia, whom Æneas married after he reached Italy
lawe: law; lawe in kind] law of nature AS lagu f.
lawghe inf. laugh AS hlehhan
lawghtre: laughter AS hleahtor
lawghynge p. laughing
lawrer: laurel OF laurier
lawriol: spurge-laurel OF laureole
laxatyf: lavative, purge OF laxatif
lay sb. lay, song OF lai < Celt laoi "poem"
lay sb. law, faith OF lei
lay 3 pt. s., pl.; cf. lye
layneres: thongs: with layneres lacynge] with fastening up of straps OF laniere
lazar: leper Lat Lazarus (Luke xvi. 20)
Leandre: Leander, lover of Hero, who frequently swam the Hellespont to see her, and was finally drowned in a storm
leche: leech, physician AS lǣce
lechecraft: skill in medicine
lecherous a. sensual OF.
lecherye: lust OF.
lechour: lewd fellow OF lecheor
lede inf. bring; ledith pr. s.; leden pr. pl; ladd pt. s., pl.; lad pp. AS lǣdan
leden sb. speech; ledene dat. AS lēden
ledith pr. s. leads; cf. lede
leed sb. kettle, the kitchen-copper, sometimes built in permanently with grate, or furnace, below AS lēad n.
leed sb. lead
leef sb. leaf; leef or with the flour, Lb 72, an apparent reference to a courtly debate among poets in Chaucer's time AS lēaf n.
leef a. lief, gladly AS lēof
leefful: permissible AS leaf + ful
leeges: lieges, subjects OF liege
leene a. lean AS hlǣne
leep 3 pt. s. leaped AS hlēapan
leere sb. the loin, flank ME lire; cf. Icel lǣr
leere inf. learn AS leornian
leese inf. lose; cf. lese AS leosan
leeste: least
leet pt. s. let; leet he slyde] he neglected; leet do] ordered to make; cf. lette
leeve a. dear AS lēofe
leevestow: believest thou; cf. leve

leeveth pr. believes; cf. leve
lefere: gladder, more welcome
left pp. left, neglected; cf. leve
legende: story, often religious OF.
legges: legs; cf. Icel leggr
leid pp. laid
lekes pl. leeks AS lēac
lemes: beams AS lēoma
lemes: limbs AS lim
lemman: lover, mistress AS leof "dear" + mann
lene inf., imp. lend, give AS lǣnan
lene a. lean, thin AS hlǣne
lenger a. longer AS.
lenger ad. longer; ever lenger the more] the longer I love and dread you, the more I do Pi 95
lengest: longest
lengthe: length, height; upon lengthe] after a long run AS lengþu
Lente: Lenten time
leonesse: lioness
leonyn: lion-like OF leonin
leorne inf. learn AS leornian
leos: people; cf. heven
leoun: lion; the constellation Leo, of which the principal star is called Regulus (royal)
Lepe: a town in Spain
lere inf. learn; lered pp. AS lǣran
lerne inf. learn, teach; lerned pp. AS leornian
lernyd a. learned, educated
lernynge sb. learning
lese sb. leash OF lesse
lese inf. lose, ruin; leseth 3 pr. s.; loste pt. s.; losten pr. pl.; lore, lorn, lorne, lost pp. AS leosan
lesse: less AS lǣssa
lessoun: lesson F leçon
lest sb. delight, desire AS lust
lest pr. s. list, desire AS lystan
lest a. least
lestyth 2 pr. pl. list, desire; cf. lest
lesynge: losing, loss
lesynges: lies, deceits AS lēasung
let 3 pr. s. hinders; pp.; cf. letten
let imper. put aside; cf. lette
lete inf. let, allow, give up, divorce; cf. lette
letith pr. s. leave; cf. lette
letre s. letters OF.
lette sb. delay < AS lettan "hinder"
lette, letten inf. let, allow, give up, cease; lete pr. s.; letith pr. s.; leet pt. s.; lat, let imp.; laten pp. AS lǣtan
lette 3 pt. s. hindered; cf. letten
letten inf. hinder; let, lettest pr. s.; lette pt. s.; let pp. AS lettan
lettest pr. s. hindrest; cf. letten
letteris: characters
Lettow: Lithuania, now a part of Western Russia and Eastern Prussia
lettrure: learning OF letreüre
letuarie: letuary, physician's chest of remedies; s., pl. medicine < Lat electuarium
leve sb. permission, leave AS lēaf f.
leve a. dear; leve nor looth] good or ill AS lēof
leve inf., 1 pr. s., imp. believe; leeveth pr. s.; leevestow 2 pr. s. AS lēfan < gelēfan
leve inf., 3 pr. s. leave, neglect; lafte 3 pt. s., pl.; lafte, left pp. AS lǣfan
leve imp. live; cf. lyven AS lifian
levede 3 pt. pl. lived; cf. lyven
leveful: permissible
levene: lightning-bolt
levere a. dearer
leves pl. leaves
levyth 3 pr. s. lives; cf. lyven
lewed, lewede: ignorant, base, rude, lay AS lǣwede "laical"
lewedenesse, lewednesse: rude speech, ignorance, stupidity
lewedeste: most vile
lewedly: ignorantly
lewid: ignorant
ley inf., 3 pt. s., imp. lay; leyn pr. pl.; leyde pt. s., pl.; leyd. leyde pp. AS lecgan
leyn 3 pr. pl. lay; cf. ley
leyser: leisure, time OF leisir
Libra: the Balance, a sign of the zodiac
licenciat: the licentiate had a license from the Pope to hear con-

fessions everywhere, independently of the local authorities Lat.
liche: like AS gelīce
licour: liquor OF licur
lief a. dear; as sb. friend; good lief my wyf] my dear good wife AS lēof
lif: life AS līf
lifly ad. to the life
liftyng: lifting
lige: true, loyal OF liege
ligeance: allegiance OF.
liges: lieges, vassals
liggen inf. lie AS līcgan
liggynge p. lying
light: easy, light AS lēoht
lighte inf. feel light; 3 pt. s. lighted, illuminated; **lightned** pp. AS līhtan
lighte 3 pt. s. alighted AS līhtan
lightned pp. lighted (as the moon by the sun)
lightnesse: light
ligne: line, descent OF.
lihte: simple; cf. light
likerous: thirsty, greedy, wanton AS liccian
liketh 3 pr. impers; if you liketh] if you please; cf. **likne** AS līcian
likinge: pleasure
liklihede: likelihood
likly: likely
liklynesse: probability
likne inf. liken; **liketh, likyth** 3 pr. impers.; **likned** pp.; cf. **lyken**
liknesse: parable
likyth 3 pr. impers. pleases; cf. **likne**
lilye sb. lily AS lilie
lippe: lip AS lippa
lipsed 3 pt. s. lisped < AS wlisp "stammering"
lisse sb. solace, comfort, alleviation AS liss, līþs f.
lisse inf. alleviate, comfort, ease; **lysse** pr. s. subj.; **lissed** pp. AS lissan
list sb. desire AS lust m.
liste impers. it pleased
listes pl. the lists in which tournaments were held AS līst
listow 2 pr. s. liest thou; cf. **lye**
lite: small, little AS lȳt
litel, litele a. little AS lȳtel
litel ad. little
litestere: dyer ME lit "dye" + stere
lith sb. limb AS lið
lithe 3 pr. s. lieth; cf. **lye**
litil: little
livede 3 pt. pl. lived; cf. **lyven**
Livius: Livy, Roman historian, whose story of Appius and Virginia (bk. iii) came to Chaucer through the Roman de la Rose
lode: load AS lōd f.
lodemenage: pilotage AS lōdmann "guide"
lofte: lofte; kepte on lofte] kept aloft, sustained; cf. Icel lopt
logge: lodge, place OF loge
logged pp. lodged
loggyng: lodging
logh: low; cf. Icel lāgr
logyk sb. logic F logique
loke sb. look < AS lōcian
loke inf. look, see, contemplate, search; **looketh** imp.; **loked** pt. pp.; over loked] looked over AS lōcian
loken pp. locked < AS loc
lokkes: locks of hair AS locc m.
lokyng, lokynge: glance, gazing, manner of looking; lokynge of] looking at
Lollere: Lollard, mumbler of prayers, a term of reproach appield to such reformers as Wyclif; it is confused with **loller**, a vagabond, and is made to pun badly with the Latin **lolium**, or tare, as in B 1183
lomb: lamb AS lamb n.
lond sb. land; pl. countries AS lond n.
longcastel: punning allusion to Lancaster, John of Gaunt, earl of Richmond ("riche hil") Du 1318
longe a. long
longen inf. belong; **longeth** 3 pr. s. < AS gelong
longen 3 pr. pl. long, desire; **longed** pt. s. AS langian
longere: longer
longes: lungs AS lungen
longynge: belonging
loo interj. lo!

loode-sterre: lode-star, pole-star
looke sb. glance
looketh imp. search; cf. **loke**
lookyng sb. glance
loore: lore, learning, teaching AS lār f.
loos a. loose, unrestrained; cf. Icel lauss
Looth: Lot, Abraham's kinsman
looth a. loath, unwilling, odious, hateful; looth or lief] displeasing or pleasing; me were looth] I should be loath AS lāð
loothly a. hideous
lord: lord (Mars) B 303; **lordes** poss. AS hlāford m. "loaf-ward"
Lorde interj. Lord!
lordeth 3 pr. s. lords over
lordynges: sirs
lore sb. learning AS lār f.
lore pp. lost; cf. **lese**
lorel: wretch; cf. **lorn**, a "lost" person
lorn pp. lost; cf. **lese**
los, losse: loss, destruction AS.
losengeour: flattering liar OF losengeor
loste pt. s., pp. lost; cf. **lese**
losten pt. pl lost; cf. **lese**
lothere: less welcome
lotynge: hiding; cf. AS lūtian
loude ad. loud AS hlūde
loueste: lowest
lough: low; cf. Icel lāgr
lough 3 pt. s., pl. laughed; cf. **laughe**
louryng: lowering, threatening; cf. Du loeren
loute inf. bow AS lūtian
love sb. love, lady-love AS lufu
love-days: days for settling disputes by a referee, without going to law. The friars were frequently the umpires
love-drury: affection OF druerie
love-drynke: love-potion
love-knotte: love-knot
love-likynge: loving
lovede 3 pt. s. loved
loves: loaves AS hlāf
lovyere: lover < AS lufian
lowde: loud, rude AS hlūd
lowe: low, draggled, in a low pitch; he bar him lowe] behaved as a menial
lowely a. humble
lowely ad. humbly
lowere: lower
Lucan: Lucan, b. 38 A. D., Roman poet, wrote Pharsalia, an historical poem treating of Cæsar and Pompey
luce sb. pike OF lus
Lucifer: the fallen angel
Lucina: the moon, Proserpina
Lucrece: wife of Collatinus; when ravished by Sextus Tarquinius, she slew herself for shame. Her death is given as the cause for the overthrow of the kingly power and the foundation of the republic in Rome
Lucresse; cf. **Lucrece**
Lucye: Lucilia, wife of Lucretius
lulleth 3 pr. s. lulls, soothes; cf. G lullen
Lumbardye: Lombardy, the plain of North Italy, in which Milan is situated
lurkynge: lying hid
lussheburghes: light coins from Luxembourg, whence the name
lust, luste sb. desire, pleasure, delight AS lust
luste 3 pt. s. reflex, liked
lustyhede: lustihood, vigor
lustely, lustily: lustily, gaily
lusty: eager, vigorous, gay < AS lust
lustynesse: pleasure
luxurie: lechery OF.
luyte ad. little; cf. **lyte**
lychewake: watch over a corpse AS līc + waca
lycorys: licorice OF licoris
Lyde: Lydia, an ancient kingdom in Asia Minor
lye sb. a lie AS lyge
lye inf. lie, lie prostrate, remain, lodge; **listow** 2 pr. s.; **lithe, lyth** pr. s.; **lay** pt. s., pl AS licgan
lyen inf. tell lies, deceive; **lyeth** pr.; **lyed** pt. AS lēogan
Lyeys: city in Armenia, taken about 1367
lyf, lyfe: life AS. līf
lyght sb. light AS lēoht

lyght a. light, easy
lygne: line OF ligne
Lygurge: Lycurgus
lyinge p. lying
lyke a. like AS gelīce
lyke conj. as
lyken inf. please; lykne 1 pr. s.; lyked 3 pt. s.; lyke pr. s. subj. AS līcian
lykerous: lecherous
lyking sb. pleasure
lylie sb. lily AS lilie
lym: limb AS lim
lym: lime AS līm
lyme-rod: lime-twig
lymere: dog in leash; lymerys pl. OF limier
lymmes pl. limbs
lymytacioun: limit, district OF limitation
lymytour sb. a begging friar who was limited in his begging to a certain territory OF.
lynage: lineage, descent F lignage
lynde: linden tree AS lind f.
lyne: line, race OF ligne
lyned pp. lined
Lynyan: Giovanni di Lignano, professor of law at Bologne, 1363-1383
lysse pr. s. subj. comfort, ease; cf. lisse
lyst sb. ear < AS hlyst, hearing
lyst pr. s. impers. it pleases; me lyst ryght evil] I had no desire to AS lystan
lystes: lists
lytarge sb. litharge, lead monoxide OF.
lyte a. little
lyte ad. little
lytel a., ad. little
lyth sb. limb AS lið
lyth 3 pr. s. lies (at law); cf. lye
lyve dat. life; a life; on lyve] alive; in his life (with vague expletive force) D 43; his lyve] in his life Du 247
lyven inf. live; lyve 1 pr. s.; levyth 3 pr. s.; levede, livede 3 pt. pl.; leve imp. AS libban
lyvely a. lively
lyver: liver, person alive
lyveree: livery F livrée
lyves (a. use). alive, live, living
Lyvia: Livia, wife and murderer of Drusus, son of Tiberius, A. D. 23
lyvis creature: living creature
lyvynge: life, manner of life; in hir lyvynge, hir lyvynge] during her whole life
lyvys (a. use). life's

M

maad 3 pt. s., pp. made; cf. make
maat a. dejected, feeble OF mater
Macedoyne, Macidonye: Macedonia
Machabee: "Book of the Maccabees," in the Apocrypha
Macrobeus: Macrobius, Latin author of about 400, whose edition of Cicero's "Somnium Scipionis" was accepted as authoritative on the subject of dreams.
mad inf. be mad; madde 2 pr. s. < AS gemǣdd
mad pp. made; cf. make
madist 2 pt. s. made; cf. make
Madrian: probably St. Mathurin, whose body would not stay in the earth until it was buried in France, as he desired
madyn 3 pt. pl. made; cf. make
madyr: madder, a plant used in dyeing AS mædere
magestee: majesty, power OF majeste
magicien: magician OF.
magyk sb. magic; magyk natureel] a proper use of occult powers, as opposed to the improper use, or black art OF.
Mahoun: Mahomet, Mohammed B 224
maille: mail, armor OF maille "ring of mail"
maist 2 pr. s. may; cf. mow
maister: master, sir (a general appellative); maistres pl. OF maistre
maister-strete: main street
maister-tour: main tower
maistresse: mistress; duenna
maistrie: the best; medical term = sovereign OF.

make sb. mate, husband, wife AS gemaca

make inf. make, draft, formulate, compose (poetry); **makestow** 2 pr. s.; **maketh** 3 pr. s.; **maken** 3 pr. pl.; **madist** 2 pt. s.; **made, maad** 3 pt. s.; **madyn** 3 pt. pl.; **mad, maad, maked** pp. AS macian

makere: creator Pf 199

makestow 2 pr. s. makest thou; cf. **make**

Makomete: Mohammed

makyng: composing

maladye: malady; lik the loveris maladye of Hereos] like one afflicted with the lover's disease OF maladie A 1373

male: bag OF male

malencolie: melancholy, bitter humor OF malencollie

malencolik a. melancholic, one of the four humors; choleric, phlegmatic, sanguine and melancholic

maleys: malice OF malice

malgre: in spite of OF.

Malkin: Maud, the maid

Malkynes: poss. of Malkin, nickname for Maud

Malle: a sheep's name; (cf. Burns' Puir Mailie)

malyce: malice

manace sb. menace, threat OF menace

manaceth 3 pr. s. menaces OF.

manasynge: threatening

mandementz: summonses OF.

mane, techel, phares; cf. Daniel v.

maner: manor-house OF maneir "village"

maner, manere: manner, behavior, deportment; kind of, sort of; assured maner] self-reliance OF maniere

manhede, manhod: manhood, manliness

mankynde: mankind, the human race

mannes poss. s. man's

mannysh: virago, woman who assumes man's character

mansioun: mansion; cf. **paleys** OF.

manslawhtre: manslaughter AS mannslacht

mantel sb. mantle, cloak OF.

mantelet: small mantle OF.

manye sb. mania OF manie

manye a. many AS manig

manys: poss. man's

mapamonde: map of the world OF mappemonde

mapul: maple AS mapultrēow

marbul: marble OF marbre

marchal: marshal OF mareschal

marchant sb. merchant OF.

Marcia Catoun: Marcia, daughter of Cato the Younger, refused to remarry

Marcien: belonging to Mars

mareys: marsh OF marais

mariage: marriage; maad many a mariage . . . at his owene cost] arranged weddings OF.

mark: likeness, image AS mearc D 696

mark: an English money of account, value 13s. 4d. AS marc

markys: marquis OF.

markysesse: marchioness

Mars: the god of war

Martes: poss. of **Mars**

martir: martyr; Thomas à Becket, slain at Canterbury, 1170, by emissaries of Henry II A 17 AS martyr

martirdom: martyrdom

martireth 3 pr. s. martyrs

marybones: marrow-bones

maryed 3 pt. s. married

maryneer: mariner OF marinier

mased: amazed, bewildered; cf. Norw. masast "to fall asleep"

masse: mass, eucharist OF.

Massyrisse: Massinissa, king of Numidia, ally of Rome

mast: mast, acorns, beechnuts AS mæst f.

maste: mast (of a ship) mæst m.

mastresse; cf. **maistresse**

mat: exhausted; cf. **maat**

mate: checkmate; exhausted; cf. **check**

mateere, matere: matter, business, subject OF matiere

Mathew: the "gospeller," who

gives the words "swear not at all" (v. 34)

matrimoigne: matrimony OF matrimoine

matyns: matins, prayers OF matines

Maudelayne, Maudeleyne: a corruption of Magdalen

maugree: in spite of OF.

maumettrie: Islam, Mohammedanism

maunciple: manciple, or steward of an inn of court or a college OF manciple

Mauricius: son of Alla and Constance

mawe: stomach AS maga m.

mawgree: in spite of; mawgree my hede] in spite of all I could do OF.

Maximus: a Roman officer

may: maiden AS mæg

mayde sb. maid, maid-servant AS mægden

mayde a. unmarried, chaste; (of man or woman) AS mægden D 79

mayden: maid; **maydenys** pl.

maydenhede, maydenhod, maydynhed: maidenhood, chastity

mayme: injure OF mahaignier

mayntene, maynteyne inf. maintain, carry out OF maintenir A 1441

mayst 2 pr. s. may; cf. **mow**

mayster sb. master

mayster a. master, chief

maystrye: token of mastery

maze: puzzling thing; cf. **mase**

mazednesse: amazement

mazelyn: maple-bowl; cf. ODu maser "maple-excrescence"

me pers. pron., dat. and acc. to me, me

Mecene: Messene, a town near Sparta

meche, mechel: much; cf. **mochel**

mede, meede: mead, meadow AS mæd f.

mede: mead (drink) AS meodo m.

Medea: wife of Jason q. v. She helped Jason to obtain the Golden Fleece, and then fled with him to Greece. By magic she restored Jason's father to youth. When Jason proved untrue to her, she slew her children, took vengeance on her rival, and returned to her home

medecyne sb. remedy OF.

mediacion, mediacioun: mediation, intercession OF.

medlee a. medley, of mixed stuff or color OF medlee

meede sb. reward AS mēd f.

Meede: Lucre

meeke: meek Scand.

meel: meal AS melu

meene inf. mean, intend, say; **mene** 1 pr. s.; **menyst** 2 pr. s.; **mente** 3 pt. s.; **ment** pp. AS mǣnan "tell"

meenewhile: meanwhile

meeste: greatest (in rank)

meeth: mead (drink) AS meodu

meetre: metre, verse OF.

meignee: army; cf. **meynee** OF maisnie B 3532

mekly: meekly

meknesse: meekness

Melan: Milan

melancolye: melancholy, sadness OF melancolie

Meleagree: Meleager, Grecian hero, organized the Calydonian boar-hunt

meles pl. meals, repasts AS mǣl n.

Melesie: maidens of Miletus, in Asia Minor

melle: mill AS mylen

melodye: melody, music OF.

membre: member, part OF.

memorial: preserving memory OF.

memorie: memory; in memorie] conscious OF.

memoyre: memory, recollection OF memoire

mencioun sb. mention OF mention

mene a. middle; **meene weyes**: middle course OF meiien

mente 3 pt. s. meant; cf. **meene**; **ment** pp.

menyst 2 pr. s. say, mean; cf. **meene**

mercenarie: hireling Lat mercenarius

Mercurie: Mercury, patron of learning and of "clerks"; also the star Mercury, opposite in its exaltation and dejection to Venus

mercy interj. have mercy! OF Du 1218

mercyable: merciful OF merciable

mere: mare AS mere f.

mère: F sea

merite: recompense OF.

merk: image, form AS mearc

merlioun: merlin, a kind of hawk OF esmerillon

mermayde: mermaid

meroure, merour: mirror OF mireor

merthe: mirth, good cheer AS myrgþ f.

merveille, mervayles pl. wonder, strange circumstance, marvels OF.

merveillous: marvellous

mery a. merry AS myrig

mery ad. (ironically) finely

meschance: misfortune OF meschеance

mescheef. meschief: mishap, misfortune; at meschief] overcome, defeated OF.

message: message, messenger, prophet OF.

messager: messenger

messagerye: message-sending

messedayes: mass-days

mester: occupation OF mestier

mesurable a. temperate OF.

mesure s. moderation; by mesure] moderately, to a proper extent OF.

met 3 pr. s. dreameth; cf. **mete**

met pp. dreamed; cf. **mete**

mete sb. meat, food; at mete] at the table AS mete m.

mete a. meet, fitting; no mete] no equal Du 488 AS mǣte

mete inf. meet; **metyth** 3 pr. s.; **mette** pt. pp. AS mētan

mete inf. dream; **met, mette** pr. s.; **mette** pt.; **met** pp. AS mǣtan

Metellius: Metellius, said by Valerius Maximus to have killed his wife when drunk

Methamorphosios: the "Metamorphoses" of Ovid

methynketh: I think

metres: poetry OF.

mette 3 pt. pl., pp. **met**; cf. **mete**

mette pt. dreamed; cf. **mete**

metynge sb. dreaming; kynges metynge Pharao] the dream of King Pharaoh

metyth 3 pr. s. meets; cf. **mete**

meve inf. move OF moveir

mevid: proposed

mewe: perch or place for bird OF mue

meynee: household menials, servants, company OF maisnie

meyntenaunce s. demeanor OF maintenance

Middelburgh: a Dutch port on the island of Walcheren. The wool staple was situated here from 1384 to 1388, before and after which it was at Calais. This reference seems to date the writing of the prologue between 1384 and 1388

mille: mill AS mylen

millere: miller

ministre: servant, ruler; pl. officers OF.

mirour sb. mirror OF mireor

mirre: myrrh OF.

mis sb. wrong OF L 266

mis a. wrong

mishappe 3 pr. imper. mishap, go wrong

misseyst 2 pr. s. speakest ill

miteyn: mitten OF mitaine

mo a. more, another; tymes mo] at other times AS mā n.

mo ad. more

mochel sb. size AS micel

mochel a., ad. much

modifye inf. modify OF modifier

modyr: mother AS modor

moebles: furniture OF moble

moerdre sb. murder AS morðor

moeved 3 pt. s. stirred OF moveir

moevere: mover, originator

moevyng: moving; firste moevyng] the primum mobile, or first (that is, ninth) sphere, in which all planets are carried in diurnal motion from east to west (Ptolemy)

mone sb. moon AS mona
mone sb. moan, complaint (? AS mān f.)
moneie, moneye: money OF.
monethe sb. month AS mōnaþ m.
monstre: monster OF.
montaigne: mountain OF.
montance: amount, value OF.
monthe: month AS mōnaþ m.
mony: many AS monig
moo: more; cf. **mo**
mooder: mother; the earth C 729; cf. **moder**
moone sb. moon; phases of moon A 403; cf. **mone**
moore a. more AS māra
moorne 3 pr. s., pl. mourn; cf. **morne**
moornynge: mourning
moost: most, greatest
moote 3 pr. s., 1 pr. pl. must; cf. **mot**
moralitee: morality OF.
mordre sb. murder AS morðor
morder 1 pr. s. murder; **mordred** 2 pt. pl. subj.; **mordred** pp. AS myrðrian
mordrere: murderer
mordrynge: murdering
mormal sb. cancer, open sore OF mortmal
morne sb. morning; **morne milk**] morning-milk AS morgen m.
morne inf. mourn; **moorne, moorneth** pr. AS murnan
Morpheus: the god of dreams, son of Somnus, god of sleep, sometimes called the god of sleep
morter: mortar OF mortier
mortherere: murderer
mortreux sb. a kind of stew or soup OF.
morwe: morrow, morning; **a morwe**] in the morning; **by the morwe**] in the morning AS morgen
morwenynge sb. morning
morwe-song: matins A 830
morwetyde: morning
morwnyng: morning
mosel: muzzle OF musel
most, moste 1, 3 pt. s. must, might
mot, mote 1 pr. s. must; **mote, moote** 3 pr. s.; **moote** 3 pr. pl.; **motyn** 1 pr. pl. AS mōt
mote sb. notes of horn OF mot
motes sb. pl. motes, small particles AS mot
mottelee sb. motley, party-colored garb; cf. OF motelet "little clod"
motthes: moths AS moððe
motyf: idea OF motif
motyn pr. pl. must; cf. **mot**
mountaunce, mountenaunce: amount OF montance
mous: mouse AS mūs, pl. mȳs
moustre sb. pattern OF.
mow 3 pr. pl. may; **mowe** pr. s., pl.; **maist** 2 pr. s.; **myght, myghten** pr. AS magan
mowled pp. mouldy, old; cf. **mowlen** < ME moul "mould"
mowlen inf. grow mouldy orig. uncert.
Moyses: Moses, in Jewish legend, had a ring causing forgetfulness F 250
moyst, moyste: moist; cf. **humour** A 420; new; soft, not yet dried out and stiff A 457 OF moiste
moysty: new (of ale)
muche and lite: great and small
muchel a. much
muchel ad. much, greatly
mullok: refuse heap < mull "dirt"
multiplie inf. multiply; change metals alchemically G 669 OF.
murie: merry AS myrig
murier: more pleasant
murierly ad. more merrily
murmure sb. murmuring OF.
murmureden pt. pl. buzzed, talked in low voice
murmurynge: murmur
murthe: mirth AS myrgþ
mury, murye a. merry
murye ad. merrily
mused 3 pt. s. wondered, revolved OF muser "loiter"
musik: music OF musique
muste 3 pr. s. must; cf. **mōt**
mutabylyte: inconstancy OF.
mutte 2 pr. pl. must
muwe: coop for fattening fowl OF mue
"My lief is faren in londe": first

line of an old song, "My love is gone to the country" B 4069
mychel: much AS miul
Mychelmesse: Michælmas, September 29
myd a. mid, middle
Myda: Midas, king in Crete, famous for wealth and folly
myddell: mean, medium AS middel
mydnyght: midnight
myght sb. might, power; do youre myght] do all in your power AS miht f.
myght 1 pt. s. might; cf. mow
myghty: powerful
myht sb. might AS miht f.
myhten pt. pl. might; cf. mow
myle: mile AS mīl f.
my lord: the archbishop of Canterbury, or perhaps the Pope B 4635
myn poss. mine
mynde: mind, understanding, memory AS gemynd
Mynerva: Minerva, Goddess of Wisdom
mynne imp. have in mind AS gemyngian
Mynotaur: a monster, half-man and half-bull, which lived in the labyrinth in Crete. Athenian youths were doomed by him, until he was slain by Theseus
mynour: miner, sapper OF mineor
mynstralcie: minstrelsy, instrument OF menestralsie
mynstrales: minstrels OF menestrel
myracle; pl. **myraklis**: miracle; pleyes of myracles] miracle plays (of Biblical history) OF miracle
myre: mire, mud; cf. Icel mȳr
myrie a. merry AS myrge
myrthe: mirth AS myrgþ f.
myrtheles: mirthless
mys ad. amiss
mysaventure: mishap OF.
mysavyse 3 pr. pl. refl. are wrongly counseled OF.
mysboden pp. insulted, abused AS mis-bēodan
myscarie inf. miscarry, go amiss
myschefe: sorrow OF meschief
mysdeparteth 3 pr. s. wrongly divides
mysdooth 3 pr. s. mistreats
myselvyn: myself
myserie: misery OF miserie
mysfille 3 pt. s. it went amiss
myssayde pp. missaid
mysse inf., pr. s. fail, lack AS missan
myssette pp. misplaced, unsuitable
mysspeke 1 pr. s. subj. speak amiss
mystake pp. mistaken
myster: trade, craft; what myster men] what sort of men OF mestier
mystihede: mistiness, mystery
mystriste inf. mistrust
mysusen inf. misuse OF mesuser
myte: mite, little bit OF mite "small coin"
mytes: mites, small insects AS mīte

N

na: no AS nā never
Nabugodonosor: Nebuchadnezzar
nacion: nation OF nation
nadderys: serpents AS nǣdre
naille 3 imp. s. nail up AS naglian
nailynge p. fitting with spikes
naked pp. as a. naked, bare, destitute, plain AS nacod
nakednesse: nakedness
nakerers: drums OF nacaire
nakyd: naked
nam for ne am: am not
namlie: namely, particularly AS nama + -ly
namo: no more
namoore: no more
napoplexie: nor apoplexy
nappeth: naps AS hnæppian
Narcisus: Narcissus, beloved by Echo, was punished for his neglect of her by becoming enamoured of the reflection of his own face in a fountain which he watched until he pined away and was turned into a flower
narette for ne arette: ascribe not
narowe: close AS nearu

nart for **ne art**: art not
narwe: narrow, close
nas for **ne was**: was not; I nas but] I was simply
nat: not
nath, nathe for **ne hath**: hath not
nathelees: nevertheless AS nā never
nativitee: birth OF.
nature: nature, race OF.
natureel, naturel: natural; naturel day] twenty-four hours; natureel magyk] cf. **magyk** OF naturel
navele: navel AS navela
nawht: not AS nāwiht
nay a. as sb. untruth Du 147; cf. Icel nei
nayl: nail, to catch and hinder one, a hindrance A 3877; pl. finger-nails C 651 AS nægel
ne: nor, not
necessarie: necessary act OF necessaire
necessitee condicioneel: necessity which is conditioned only by knowledge not by compulsion, as when we see a man falling from a roof and know he will be killed B 4440
necligence: negligence OF negligence
necligent: negligent OF negligent
nede sb. need, desire, peril AS nēod f.
nede inf. need; **nedeth** 3 pr. s.; **nedest** 3 pt. s. AS nēodian
nede ad. needs, of necessity AS nedes Du 1073
nedelees: needlessly
nedely: of necessity
nedes: needs, of necessity
nedescost: necessarily
nedles: poss. needle's AS nǣdl
nedys pl. needs; for nedys] of necessity
neede a. necessary
needfull: needy
neer ad. poss. near AS nēar
neer ad. comp. nearer
neet sb. neat, cattle AS nēat
negardye: niggardliness
negh: nearly AS nēh
neighebore: neighbor AS nēahgebūr
nekke: neck AS hnecca
nekke-boon: spine
nel, nele for **ne wele**: will not
Nembrot: Nimrod, a "mighty hunter" in the Bible, and builder of Nineveh, Genesis x. 9
nempnen inf. call by name; **nempned** 3 pt. s. AS nemnan
ner, nere for **ne were** pt. s., pl.; pt. subj. were not, should not be
ner ad. never, ne'er
ner, nere ad. comp. nearer
nercotikes: narcotics OF narcotique
Nero: emperor of Rome, famed for his cruelty
nerre: nearer
Nessus: a Centaur, killed by Hercules
netheles: natheles
nette: net AS nett n.
neveradeel: not at all
nevew: nephew OF neveu
nevir: never
newe a. new AS nēwe
newe ad. newly
newed 3 pt. s., pp. renewed, was freshened
newefangel a. fickle
newefangelnesse: fondness for novelty, fickleness
next: next, nearest; next before] just before
neyghbur: neighbor AS nēahgebūr
neythir: neither
Nicerates: Niceratus, a Greek
Nichanore: Nicanor, a Greek, general of Antiochus
niente: nothing Ital.
nil for **ne will**: will not
ninthe: ninth AS nigoða
nobil: noble OF noble
nobledest 2 pt. s. ennobled
noblesse: nobleness, rank, honor OF.
nobleye: nobility OF nobleie
nodde inf. nod, shake his head orig. uncert.
noe: no
nof, ne of: nor of
noght sb. nothing AS nā wiht
noght ad. not; not at all

noht ad. not, naught
nolde for ne wolde: would not
nombre: number OF.
non: none AS nān
nones sb. nonce, time-being ME for then ones < þam (dat. AS þe)
nonne: nun AS nunne f.
nonys adv. for the nonce; cf. nones
noo: no
noon: none AS nān
noot for ne wot: know not
noote: note, tune; by noote] according to musical note OF note
norice sb. nurse OF nurrice
norissed pp. raised OF nurir
norisshynge: period of growth
norissyng sb. nourishment, nutriment, rearing
Northfolk sb. Norfolk, a county of England on the east coast (East Anglia)
northren: northern
norture: good manners OF norriture
nosethirles pl. nostrils AS nosþyrl
nost 2 pr. s. knowest not; cf. noot
not for ne wot: does not know; cf. noot
notabilitee: striking event OF.
note: music, tune OF.
notemuge: nutmeg ME note "nut" + OF mugue "musk"
not-heed: close cropped head
nother: neither; never nother] neither of them AS nōwðer
nothyng ad. not at all
notified pp. proclaimed OF.
notys pl. notes
nought: not
noumberis: numbers, ratios OF nombre
noumbre sb. and inf. number
nouncertaine: uncertainty < noncertain
nouther: neither AS nōwðer
novelrie: variety OF novelerie
noveltee: novelty OF.
novys: novice OF.
nowadayes: nowadays
nowches: brooch OF nusche "necklace"
nowe: now; as nowe] now
Nowel: Noel, birthday (of Christ)
nowght: not
nowher: nowhere
nowthe: now; as nowthe] at present AS nūðā "now then"
noyse: noise OF.
nuwefangulnesse: fickleness
ny: nigh AS nēh
nyce: ignorant, foolish, without malice; careful A 398 OF nice < Lat nescius
nycete s. folly
nygard: niggard, stingy one OF.
nygh, nyghe ad. nigh, nearly OF nēh
nyght, nyghte sb. night AS neaht, niht f.
nyghte inf. become night
nyghtertale: night time; cf. Icel nātterþel
nyghtyngale: nightingale AS nihtegale
nyhtyngale: nightingale
nyghtys pl. nights
nyl for ne wyl: will not
nymphes: nymphs Lat nympha
nyn: nor in
nyne: nine AS nigon
nynetene: nineteen AS nigontȳne
Nynyve: Nineveh, ancient capital of Assyria
nys for ne is: is not
nysete: foolishness
nyste for ne wyste: did not know

O

o: of L 360
o: one AS ān
obeieth 3 pr. pl. obeys; cf. obeye OF obeïr
obeisant: obedient
obeisaunce, obeissaunce: obedience; in your obeisaunce] obedient to you
obeye inf., 3 pr. pl. obey; obeyde 3 pt. OF obeir
obligacioun: a bond OF obligation
observaunce: respect, homage, ceremony OF observance

observe inf. favor, allow OF observer Lat observare
obstinat: obstinate Lat obstinatus
Occident: west
occupye inf. occupy; **occupieth** 3 pr. s. OF occuper
octogamye: marriage of eight wives in succession < Jerome's treatise Advers. Jovinianum, "octogamos"
Octovyan: Augustus Cæsar, Octavian L 624
Octovyen: an emperor of Rome who married Floraunce, daughter of Dagobert, king of France. He is the subject of an early English metrical romance Du 368
Odenake: Odenathus or Odenatus, king of Palmyra
of ad. off
of prep. in, with; **of newe]** recently
of caste imp. discard
offenden inf. offend
offensioun: harm OF.
offertorie: offertory Lat offertorium
office sb. secular employment
officere: officer; pl. servants OF.
offreth imp. pl. offer AS offrian OF offrir
offring sb. the proceeds of the voluntary offerings
offrynge: offering; in Chaucer's day the people carried their offerings to the altar, and questions of precedence arose A 450
offys: office, duty
of-showve: shove off, repel
ofspryng sb. offspring
oftaken pp. removed
ofte a. pl. many; **ofte tyme]** often AS oft
ofte ad. often
ofter: more often
oght sb. aught AS āwiht
oght 3 pr. s. ought AS āgan
oght ad. at all
oille sb. oil; **oille of tartre]** cream of tartar OF oille
ok(e): oak AS āc f.
olde: old AS ald
olifaunt: elephant OF olifant
Olofernus: Holofernes, captain of Nebuchadnezzar's army
olofte: aloft ME on lofte
olyve: olive OF.
Olyvere: Oliver, one of Charlemagne's Twelve Peers. Slain with Roland at Roncesvalles, through the treachery of Ganelon q. v. Du 1122
olyveres: olive-yards OF olivier
Omer: Homer
on prep. on, in; **on alle thynge]** at all cost; **on shames deeth]** a death of shame
on: one
onbyde: abide, wait
ones: once, united C 696; **at ones]** at once
onethe: scarcely; cf. unnethe AS unēaðe "un-easy"
onhap: misfortune
onknowyn: unknown
onkynde: unkind
on-lofte: aloft
on the: one of the (followed by superlative)
onstedefastnesse: unsteadfastness
onworthieste: unworthiest
ony: any AS ǣnig
oo: one; cf. oon
ook: oak AS āc f.
oold: old AS ald
oon: one; **evere in oon]** constantly; **after oon]** up to standard
oones: once
oonly: only
oonys: once
oore: ore AS ōra
ooth: oath AS āð m.
oother: other
opene inf. open
openers: fruit of the medlar, not good to eat until it began to decay
open-heveded: bare-headed
operaciouns: operations, affects OF operation
opie: opium OF.
opposicioun: opposition (of sun and moon in sky in relation to earth) OF opposition
opposit: opposite OF opposit
oppresse inf. oppress, violate OF oppresser

oppressyoun: oppression, tyranny OF oppression
opyn a. open AS open
or conj. before, ere, or
or prep. before
oratorie: oratory, small chapel OF oratorie
orde: point AS ord m.
ordenaunce: order OF.
ordeyned pp. ordained, arranged OF ordener
ordinance: arrangement; by ordinance] in order
ordre sb. order, religious order; ordres foure] the four orders of begging friars were: the Dominicans, or Black Friars; the Franciscans, or Grey Friars; the Carmelites, or White Friars; the Augustin Friars A 210 OF ordre
Orewelle: an early name for Harwich, a seaport on the eastern coast of England
orgnes pl. organs, the earlier name for what we call an organ (cf. a bellows) AS organe
orgon: organ B 4041
orient: the east
original sb. origin
orisoun: prayer OF orison
orizonte: horizon OF orizonte
Orliens: Orleans, seat of a university
orloge, orlogge: large clock OF.
ornementz: ornaments
Orpheus: legendary Greek musician, whose music moved even stones and trees, and enabled him to descend with safety into the infernal regions in search of his dead wife, Eurydice. She was given permission to follow him back to earth, provided that he did not turn back to see whether she were following him. He was unable to refrain from looking back, whereupon Eurydice vanished from his sight. While he was in Hades, his music gave temporary release from toil and punishment to all who heard it
Orygenes poss. Origen, 185-253 A. D., church father, wrongly thought to have written a treatise on Mary Magdalene
Osanne: Hosanna
ost: host OF.
otes: oats AS āte pl. ātan
other, othre: other; **otheres** poss. s.; **othere** pl. AS oðer
other conj. either, or
ootherweys: otherwise
othes: oaths AS āð m.
ouche: clasp, necklace, nouch OF nusche
ought sb. anything AS āwiht
oughte pr. pl., pt. s. ought
oughte ad. at all Du 536
ouhte 3 pr. s. ought
oule: owl; **oulys** pl. AS ūle
ounces: thin locks, parts OF once
oune: own AS āgen
oure: pron. our C 786
oures pl. hours OF heures
out interj. down with! B 4233; alas! B 4570
outbreke: break out, begin to speak
out caughte 3 pt. s. drew out
oute ad. out, uttered
outen inf. utter; **oute** 1 pr. pl. AS ūtian
outerly: utterly, finally AS ūttra
outhees: outcry AS ūt + hās "command"
outher: either, or AS āwðer
outlawe: outlaw AS ūtlaga
outrageous: insolent, reckless C 650 OF outrageus
outraunce: the last extremity OF.
outrely ad. utterly, absolutely
outreye inf. exceed the proper bounds (?OF outreier)
outridere: outrider, whose business was to look after the outlying manors belonging to the monastery
outspronge 3 pt. s. spread abroad
outsterte 3 pt. pl. ran out
out-taken pp. excepted
outter: outer
outtreste: uttermost
outtwyne 2 pr. pl. twist out, utter
over: over, above
overal: everywhere
overborde: overboard AS ofer bord

overcaste inf. cast down
overdoon pp. done to excess
overest a. uppermost
overlad pp. put upon, domineered AS oferlǣdan
overlade inf. over load
over-lippe: upper lip
overmacche inf. overmatch
overmesure: to excess, in the extreme
overryden pp. run over AS oferridan
overshette pt. pl. over-run the scent ME oversheten
overskipte 1 pt. s. skipped, passed over
overslope: upper garment AS oferslop
overspradde 3 pt. s. covered AS oferspræ̆dan
oversprynge pr. s. subj. flood
overthwart, overthwert: across, askance
overtoke pt. s. overtook, caught up
ovireshake pp. shaken off
Ovyde: Publius Ovidius Naso, generally called Ovid, a Latin poet (B. C. 43-19? A. D.). His chief works are the Metamorphoses, a great source book of mythology; the De Arte Amandi (The Art of Love); and the De Remedio Amoris (The Cure of Love). The two last named had great influence upon mediæval conceptions of love
ovyral: besides
owene a. own AS āgen
oweth 3 pr. s. owns
owhere: anywhere
owr, owre: our
owter: over; cf. de F outre
owtlandissh: foreign
owtrage: insolence, excess OF outrage
oxe: ox; **oxes** pl. AS oxa
oxe-stalle: ox-stall
Oxenford: Oxford
oynement: ointment OF oignement
oynons pl. onions OF oignon
oystre: oyster OF oistre

P

paas: step, foot-pace; goon a paas] go at a foot-pace OF pas
pace inf. pass, go, step, surpass OF pas
Pacience pers. Patience
pacient sb. patient OF.
pacient a. patient
Padwe: Padua, in northern Italy
paiementz: payments OF paiement
paire: pair OF.
pak: lot; cf. Du pak
Palamon: Theban noble, cousin of Arcite, in the Knight's Tale
Palatye: Palathia in Anatolia or Asia Minor
paleys: palace, mansion, or house; zodiacal sign astrologically appropriated to planet; in C M the mansions concerned are Gemini, Taurus, Aries; Venus and Mars meet in Taurus, Venus' mansion (?); Venus flees to Cylenius (Mercury's) "tour," Gemini (113); Mercury beholds Venus from Venus' valance, the edge of Aries, fancifully called Venus' bed-curtains; Mars is left in Taurus by the more rapid motions of the other planets; the sun, Phœbus, entered Taurus April 12; C M 54
palfrey: saddle-horse OF palefrei
Pallas: Minerva, goddess of wisdom
palled: pale OF pale
palmeres: pilgrims who bear palm branches as signs that they have reached the Holy Land. Used by Chaucer more loosely as meaning a pilgrim OF paumier
Palymerie: Palmyra
Pamphilus: author of "Liber de Amore," a Latin poem, in elegiac form, bewailing his love for Galatea
pan: skull, crown of head AS panne
Pan: Greek god of shepherds, and of nature in general. He is depicted as half-man, half-goat
Panik: the location is uncertain

pantere: snare, bag-net OF pantiere
Pape: Pope
papejay: popinjay, green woodpecker OF papegai
par amour: lovingly, with devotion OF.
par cas: perchance
paradys: paradise OF paradis
parage: parentage OF.
paramentz: fine mantles Lat paramentum
paramour sb. lover, mistress OF.
paramour, paramours ad. longingly, lovingly
paraunter: perhaps OF par aventure
paraventure: peradventure, perhaps
parcel: part, small part OF parcelle
parde interj. OF par Dieu
pardoner: the business of the pardoner was to sell pardons or indulgences issued by the Pope. He carried relics to add credence to the pardons OF pardonier
pardoun sb. pardon OF.
parementz: rich hangings; chambre of parementz] presence-chamber OF parement
parfay: by the faith OF B 110
parfit a. perfect; with regard to holy living D 92 OF.
parfitly: perfectly
parfourne inf. perform; parfournest 2 pr. s.; parfourned pp. OF parfournir
Paris: son of King Priam of Troy; by his seduction of Helen, wife of Menelaus, he caused the Trojan war Du 331
parisshe: parish OF paroisse
parisshens sb. pl. parishioners OF paroissien
paritorie: pellitory, an herb OF paritoire
parlement: deliberative body; decision, as of such body OF.
Parnaso: Mt. Parnassus, sacred to Apollo, above Delphi
parte inf. share; parteth 3 pr. s. departs OF partir
Parthes: the Parthians, who lived in the east borders of what is now Turkey
Parthonopee: Parthenopæus, one of the Seven against Thebes
partre: part, section; partial person A 2657 OF partie
partrich sb. partridge OF perdriz
party ad. partly OF parti
parvys sb. the church-porch of St. Paul's, a common place for consultation OF.
Parys: Paris
pas sb. pace, yard OF.
passant: surpassing OF.
passen inf. surpass, pass over, omit; passed 3 pt. s.; passid pp. OF passer
passid pp. passed; cf. passen
passioun: passion, suffering, martyrdom OF.
passyng a. surpassing
pastee: pasty OF pasté
patente: an "open" letter, conferring privilege OF patente
Pathmos: Patmos, the island upon which St. John spent his last days; cf. Rev. i. 9
patriarkes: patriarchs OF.
patrone s. pattern OF patron
patroun: patron
Paulus: Paul
paunche: belly OF panche
pavement: floor OF.
pay: advantage, liking; to pay] to advantage Pf 474 OF paie
paye inf. pay; payed 3 pt. s.; payede pp. satisfied OF paier
payen a. pagan OF païen
payens sb. pagans
payndemayn: the finest and whitest bread OF pain + demaine "manorial" "private"
payne sb. pain OF peine
paynyth pr. s. takes pains; cf. peyne
payre sb. pair OF.
paysyble: peaceable OF paisible
pece: piece OF pièce
pecok a. peacock AS pēa "peacock"
Pedmark: Penmark, a promontory in Brittany, on the west coast
pees: peace OF pais

peignynge p. taking pains OF pener
peire sb. string OF paire
pekke imp. peck
pelowe: pillow AS pyle
Pemond: Piedmont
penant sb. penitent, one doing penance OF.
penaunce: penance OF.
pencel: pencil, brush OF pincel
Penelope, Penolopee: Penelope, wife of Odysseus, noted for her faithfulness to him during the ten years of his wanderings, in spite of the importunities of many suitors
penoun: pennon OF penon
pens: pence, money AS penig
penyble: painstaking, eager to please OF penible
peple: people, common people OF pueple
perauntere: par aventure, perchance OF.
peraventure: perhaps OF.
Perce: Persia
percely: parsley OF perresil
percen inf. pierce; **perseth** pr. s.; **perced** pp. OF percer
perchaunce: perhaps OF.
perche: perch, roost OF.
percynge: piercing; for percynge] to prevent piercing
pere: peer, equal OF per
peregryn: peregrine, foreign Lat peregrinus
perfit: perfect OF.
perfitly: perfectly
performen inf. perform, fulfill OF parfournir
peril: danger; upon my peril] so far as I could help it OF.
perilouse: perilous, dangerous
perisse 3 pr. pl. perish OF périr
perle: pearl OF.
permutacioun: complete change OF.
Perotheus: Pirithous, whom Theseus accompanied to Hades in an attempt to carry off Proserpina
perpetuely: perpetually OF perpetuel
perrie, perrye: jewelry, precious stones OF pierrerie
pers sb. bluish-gray material OF.
perseveraunce: perseverance, endurance OF.
perseverynge: perseverance
Persiens: Persians
persith pr. s. pierceth; cf. percen
persone: person OF.
persoun: parson; persoun of a toun] parish priest OF persone
perspectives: perspectives, lenses OF.
Pertelote: the hen
perturben 3 pt. pl. disturb OF pertourber
pervers: perverse, headstrong OF.
pes, pese: peace OF pais
pestelence: pestilence, woe OF pestilence
pesyn: pease AS pise, pl. pisan
pet: pit AS pytt
pete: pity; cf. pite
petouse: piteous, sad
petously: piteously
Petrak: Petrarch
Petro of Cipre: Pierre de Lusignan, king of Cyprus, killed 1369 B 3581
Petro: Pedro of Castile, ally of the Black Prince, killed 1369 B 3565
petyciouns: petitions OF.
peyne sb. pain, grief, care, torture; nevere for to dyen in the peyne] never even in case of death by torture OF peine
peyne inf. refl. take pains, endeavor; **payneth** pr. s.; **peyned** pt. pp. OF pener
peynte inf. paint, depict; **peyntede** 3 pt. s.; do peynte] cause to be painted OF peindre, pp. peint
peyntede 3 pt. s. painted; peyntede the leoun] Æsop tells of a man's picture of a man conquering a lion. A lion remarked, "We lions are none of us painters."
peynture: painting OF.
peyre sb. pair OF paire
peytrel: poitrel, breast-plate of horse-armor OF peitral
Phanye: daughter of Crœsus
Pharao: Pharaoh

Phasifpha: Pasiphæ, queen of Crete, mother of the Minotaur, half-man, half-bull

Phebus: Phœbus Apollo

Phidoun: Phido, slain at banquet in Athens, under the thirty tyrants, B. C. 403 (this exemplum and those following from Jerome "contra Jovinianum")

Philippes: Philips'

Philistiens: Philistines

Phillis: cf. Phyllis

philosofre: philosopher OF philosophe

philosophie: philosophy, learning OF.

philosophre: philosopher, used in a double sense, for the alchemists called themselves philosophers. The clerk was no alchemist, and had little gold A 297

Philostrate: name assumed by Arcite

phisic, phisik: physic, medicine OF.

phisicien: physician, doctor OF.

phislyas: probably the shipman's error for physices, natural philosophy

Phitoun: the Python, killed by Apollo; Ovid "Metamorphoses I"

Phyllis: daughter of Sithon, king of Thrace, and betrothed to Demophoön, son of Theseus, king of Athens, slew herself when her lover, who had gone to Athens to arrange for the wedding, did not return at the appointed time

Pictagoras: Pythagoras of Samos, B. C. 550, a mathematician who constructed a philosophy based upon the numerical relations of things. He was the first to make a scientific study of sounds and harmony

Pierides: daughters of Pierus in Thessaly, who contended with the Muses

Piers: Pierce

pigges poss. pig's ME pigge

pighte 3 pt. s. pitched < picchen

Pigmalion: Pygmalion, Greek sculptor, whose statue Galatea was given life

Pilates voys: a loud, boastful voice, like that of Pilate in the mystery plays

pilche: fur cloak or coat AS pylce

piled pp. scraggly, wanting hair AS pylian "peel"

piler, pilere sb. pillar OF A 2466

pilere a. used for pillars Pf 177

pilgrymage: pilgrimage; cf. OF pelegrinage

pilours: pillagers, robbers OF pilleur

pilwe-beer: pillowcase ME bere "case"

pipen in an yvy-leef: whistle for it

pipere a. used for pipes Pf 178

Pirrus: Pyrrhus, son of Achilles

Pisces: the Fish, a sign of the zodiac, opposite Virgo

pistel: epistle (read in church service), a lesson AS pistol

pitaunce: mess of victuals OF pitance

pite, pitee sb. pity OF pité

pith: strength AS piðа

pitous: piteous, kind OF pitos

pitously ad. piteously, sorrowfully

pitte: pit AS pytt

pittee: pity; cf. pite

place: manor house B 1910 OF.

plages: regions OF.

planete: planet OF.

plantayn: plantain OF.

plante sb. shoot AS plante D 763

plastres: bandages OF plastre AS plaster

plat: flat OF.

plate sb. flat, flat side OF.

plates: plates of iron, armor OF.

Plato: 427-347 B. C., Athenian philosopher

play, playe: sport, amusement, contrivance AS plega

playn, playne sb. the plain OF.

playn a. flat OF.

ple: plea, contention OF plet

pledynge s. strife OF plaidier

pleis pl. pleas; cf. ple

plentee: abundance; greet plentee] in great abundance OF.

plentevous sb. plenteous OF plentious
plesance, plesaunce: pleasure, delight; desire of love Pf 389 OF plaisance
plesaunt a. pleasant, good natured OF plaisant
plesen inf. please; plesed pp. OF plaisir
plesure: pleasure OF plaisir
plesynges: satisfactions
pletynge: disputing OF plaidier
pley sb. play, trick, delusion AS plega
pley, pleye inf. play, jest; pleyde pt., pp. AS plegan
pleyn a. plain, open, fair, full; pleyne pl. smooth Pf 180 OF plain
pleyn ad. plainly, fully
Pleyndamour: the probable hero of a metrical romance which has disappeared
pleyne inf. complain; pleynes pl. OF plaindre
pleynge p. amusement, sport
pleynly: plainly
Pleynt of Kynde: "De Planctu Naturæ," nature's complaint against unnatural vices; cf. Alain
pleynte: plaint, complaint OF plainte
pleynynge: complaining, lamenting
pleyynge: playing, amusement
plighte 3 pt. s. pulled ME plicchen < AS plyccan "pluck"
plighte: plighted, pledged D 1051 AS plihtan
plite sb. plight AS pliht m.
plogh, plowh sb. plough AS plōh
plowman: husbandman, small farmer, who did his own ploughing
Pluto: god of the lower world
plye inf. bend OF plier
plyt: plight, woe AS pliht m.
poete: poet OF poete
poetrie: poetry OF.
poilleys: of Apulia, a district in southern Italy
point devys: at, perfectly correct
pokkes: pox AS pocc
pokok: peacock AS pēa + cock
polax: pole-axe; cf. LG pollex "poll, head" + ax
polcat: polecat; cf. F poule + cat
Polixena: Polyxena, loved by Achilles, q. v.
Pollexene: cf. Polixena
Polymea: Polymnia, muse of serious song
polyve: pulley OF poulie
pomel: crown of the head OF A 2689
pomely grey or grys: apple-gray, dapple-gray OF pomele G 559
pompe: pomp, ceremony OF.
Pompeus, Pompeye: Pompey, who married Cæsar's daughter and (according to some historians) whose daughter Cæsar married
Poo: the river Po
popeler: poplar OF poplier
Poperyng: Poperinghe, a town near Ostend
popet: doll, used ironically OF poupette
popynjay: parrot OF papegai
poraille sb. poor trash, the mob OF povraille
Porcia: Portia
porpere: purple OF porpre
port: bearing, behavior OF port A 69
portrayture s. painting, portraiture OF.
portreitour: artist
portreitures: paintings
portrey inf. draw, depict OF portraire
portreyynge sb. painting
pose: cold in the head AS gepose
pose 1 pr. s. put the case OF poser
positif a. fixed OF.
possessioun: possession, wealth OF.
possibilitee: possibility OF.
possyble: possible OF.
post: pillar, support OF poste
potage: broth OF.
pothecarie: apothecarie OF apotecarie
pottes, pottis: pots AS pott
poudre-marchant sb. a flavoring powder used in cooking in Chau-

cer's day; marchant "merchant's," hence "good"
Poul: St. Paul
poune: pawn in chess OF peon
pouped pp. blown
poure inf. pore, gaze; orig. uncert.
poure, povre a. poor OF povre
povertee: poverty
povre ad. poorly E 1040
povreliche: poorly, in poverty
povrely: in poverty
pownage, pannage, food for swine OF pasnage
powped pt. pl. blew
poynaunt a. poignant, pungent OF poignant
poynt: point; in poynt] on the point of, ready; myd poynt] middle; in good poynt] well filled out OF.
poyson sb. poison OF.
praktike: practice OF practique
praktisour sb. practitioner OF.
pray sb. prey, plunder OF preie
prayen inf. pray; **pray** 1 pr. s.; **prayede** pt. s. OF preier
preamble: introduction Lat preambulum
preambulacioun: preamble
preche inf. preach OF prechier
prechour: preacher OF precheor
predicacioun: sermon OF.
preef: talk, assertion; with yvel preef] bad luck to your talk D 24 ? OF pruef
prees sb. press, the crowd OF presse
preesseth 3 pr. s. presses
preest: priest AS prēost
preeve inf. prove OF prover
pref: proof ? OF pruef; cf. **preef**
prefectes poss. prefect's
preferre: be preferred to, better than OF préférer
preiede pt. s. prayed
preise inf. praise OF preisier
prelaat: prelate OF prélat
prenostik: prognostication, prediction Lat prænosticabus
prente sb. print; cf. F empreint
pres sb. press; forth in pres] press forward OF presse
prescience: foreknowledge OF.
prese inf. hasten, press on OF presser
presse sb. press; leyd in press] curled by tongs or curling-papers A 81; clothes-press F O 52; mould in which bell is cast A 263 OF.
prest sb. priest AS prēost
prest a. ready OF.
presumpcioun: presumption OF.
preve sb. proof OF pruef
preve inf. prove OF prover **prueve** 3 pr. s.
prevely: privily OF privé
prevy a. privy, secret
prey, preye inf. pray; **prey** 1 pr. s.; **preyen** 1 pr. pl.; **preyden** 1 pt. pl. OF preier
preyere: prayer OF preiere
Priamus: Priam, king of Troy
Priapus: god of fruitfulness. For the story mentioned, Pf 255, see Ovid, "Fasti," 415
pridelees: without pride
prie inf. look, peer orig. uncert.
prikasour: a hard rider < AS prician
prike inf. incite, spur, urge AS prician
priking, prikynge sb. hard riding
prikke: point, prick, thrust AS pricca
principalle a. principal Du 1003
prioresse: a nun next in rank to an abbess OF.
pris sb. price, estimation, worth OF.
prisoun: prison OF prison
privee: private, personal, attendant OF privé
prively: secretly
privetee: secrets OF priveté
procede inf. proceed OF proceder
proces, processe: course, passage of time, long story OF proces
processiouns: religious processions OF.
profre sb. offer AF profter
profren inf. proffer; **profre** 2 pr. pl.; **profred** pp. AF profrer
profyt: profit OF profit
progressiouns: progressions, developments Lat progressio

prohemye: proem, introduction Lat prœmium
prolixitee: long-windedness OF.
proporcioned pp. built in proportion OF.
proporcionels convenientz: fitting proportionals, tables of fractions of the year
proporcioun: calculation of ratios OF.
propre: own, peculiar, individual, special OF.
proprely: properly
proprete: property, right OF.
prosperite: prosperity OF.
protecciouⁿ: protection OF protection
protestacioun: protestation OF.
Protheselaus: a Greek at Troy
proverbe: proverb OF.
provost: magistrate OF.
prow sb. advantage OF prou
prowesse: valor, excellence OF proesce
Pruce: Prussia. English knights frequently helped the Teutonic knights against the Lithuanians and Russians
pruddest: proudest AS prūt
Pruyse: Prussia
pṛye inf. pry, peer orig. uncert.
pryme: prime, 6-9 a. m. OF prime
prymer: primer OF primier
prynses: princes OF princesse
prys: esteem, renown; sovereyn prys] unusual renown OF pris
prysoun: prison OF prison
pryve a. secret
pryvee ad. secretly; pryvee and apert] in private and openly
pryvee sb. privy OF prive
pryvely: secretly
pryvetee: privacy
Ptholomee: Ptolemy, early geographer, misquoted by Wife of Bath
publiced pp. made public, proclaimed OF publier
Puella and Rubens: two astrological figures
pul sb. pull, try Pf 164 AS pullian
pulle inf. pluck, cheat AS pullian
pulpet: pulpit Lat pulpitum
pultrye: poultry OF pouleterie
purchace inf. buy, obtain OF purchacier
purchas sb. gain, from begging A 256 OF pourchas
purchasour: conveyancer
purchasyng sb. conveyancing, transference of property
pure a. pure, natural; very, utterly; the pure death] death itself OF pur
pure ad. entirely
pured pp. refined
purely; purely, totally
purgatorie: purgatory Lat purgatorium
purpos: purpose; to purpos of] à propos OF pourpos
purs: purse AS purs
pursute: pursuit, hue-and-cry OF poursuite
purtreye inf. draw OF pourtraire
purveiaunce: providence OF porveance
purveye inf. provide OF porveeir
put inf., 3 pr. s., pp. put, present; putte 3 pt. s.; cf. AS putung "instigation"
Pycardie: a province of France on the English Channel
pye sb. pie (? OF pie)
pye sb. magpie OF pie
pyk: pike AS pīc
pykepurs: pick purse, pickpocket
pyler: pillar OF piler
pyn sb. pin AS pinn
pynche inf. find fault with (?)OF pinchier
pynched pp. arranged in plaits
pyne: pain, suffering, passion AS pīn f.
pyne inf. torture, harm AS pīnian
pynnes sb. pins
pype inf. pipe, play the pipe < AS pīpe
pypes: pipes
Pyramus: lover of Thisbe, slew himself when he found her robe torn by a lion

Q

quad, quade: evil < Flemish quaad

quaille sb. quail OF.

quakynge p. quaking, trembling AS cwacian

qualm: pestilence AS cwealm

quantite: size OF.

quarter: fourth part of night Du 198 OF quartier

quaylis poss. pl. quails'

queene: queen AS cwēn f.

queerne: mill AS cweorn f.

quelle subj. slay AS cwellan

queme inf. phase AS cwēman

quene: queen, quean AS cwēn f.

querne: hand-mill AS cweorn f.

questio quid juris: the question is, what is the law?

questioun: question, dispute Lat questio

queynte 3 pt. s. went out, was quenched; **queynt** pp. AS cwencan < cwincan

queynte a. prudent, ingenious, elegant, neat, affected, odd OF cointe

quite inf. release, ransom, requite; **quitith** 3 pr. s.; **quite** pp.; **quite hir while]** pay her for it; **quite yow youre meede]** reward you OF quiter

quitly ad. freely, wholly

quitte: 1 pt. s. paid back; cf. quite

quod pt. s. said AS cweðan, pt. cwaeð

quook 3 pt. s. quaked, shook AS cwacian

quoth pt. s. said

quyk, quyke a. lively, alive AS cwic

quyken: bring alive, come to life; **quyked** 3 pt. s. AS cwician

quyknesse: liveliness

quyk-silver: quick-silver, mercury

quyrboilly: cuir bouilli, leather soaked in hot water and pressed into shape, becoming stiff on drying

quyte inf. requite, reward; cf. quite

R

Rachel: Rachel, "weeping for her children" Matt. ii. 18

rad pp. read; cf. **rede**

radde 3 pt. s. advised; cf. **rede**

Radix malorum est cupiditas: love of money is the root of ills (1 Tim. vi. 10)

rage sb. frenzy, fierce blast A 1985 OF.

rage inf. romp, toy wantonly OF ragier

ragerye: wild spirits OF ragerie

rakel: rash

rakelnesse: recklessness

rake-stele: rake-handle AS stēl f.

ram: a ram was the usual prize at wrestling matches AS ramm

Ram: one of the signs of the zodiac. In Chaucer's day the sun entered the Ram (Aries) on March 12, and left it on April 11. The half course refers to the half of April which is in Aries, the other half being in Taurus. The year began in March, hence the phrase, yonge sonne. Skeat gives April 16, 1387, as the probable date of the meeting of the pilgrims A 8

rampeth 3 pr. s. rush about OF ramper

ransake inf. ransack, search; cf. Icel raunsake "search a house"

rape sb. haste; cf. Icel hrapa "hasten"

rasour: razor OF rasor

rather: sooner; **never the rather]** none the sooner; more willingly AS hraðor

raughte 3 pt. s., pl. reached; cf. **reche**

raunson, raunsoun: ransom OF rançon

ravenes poss. raven's AS hræfn

ravyne: rapine, prey, greed OF.

ravysedest 2 pt. s. didst draw down OF ravir

ravyshynge: ravishing

rayed pp. striped OF rai

raysoun: reason; cf. **resoun** OF raison

Razis: Rhazes, Arabian physician of the tenth century
real: royal OF reial
realte: royalty OF roialte
reawme: realm, kingdom OF reialme
rebellyng sb. rebellion
recche 1 pr. s. reck, care; **reccheth** 3 pr. s.; **roghte, rought** 3 pt. s. AS reccean
recche: read, interpret (or make capable of interpretation) AS reccean
reccheless: careless, neglectful
receyven inf. accept OF receivre
rechased pp. headed off and driven back OF rechasser
reche inf. reach; **raughte** 3 pt. s., pl. AS rǣcan
recheles: reckless
rechelesnesse: recklessness
reclayme inf. reclaim, check OF reclamer
recomandeth 3 pr. s. reflex. commends OF recommander
recomende inf. give in charge, commend
reconforte inf. comfort again OF reconforter
recorde sb. report, testimony OF record
recorde 1 pr. s. record, remind OF recorder
recoverede pp. gained, won OF recovrer
red, rede, reed sb. advice, help, comfort AS rǣd m.
red, rede a. red AS rēad
red pp. read; cf. **rede**
redde 3 pt. s., pp. read; cf. **rede**
reddour: violence OF reidour
rede inf., 1 pr. s. read, advise, interpret; **radde, redde** 3 pt. s.; **rad, red, redde** pp.; **sweven rede**] interpret the dream AS rǣdan
redelees, redelesse: without rede or counsel, perplexed; **redeless of peyne**] without remedy for sorrow
redere: reader
redily: quickly
redith 3 pr. s. reads; cf. **rede**
redoutynge: reverence, religious fear OF redouter
redresse sb. redress OF redresser
redresse inf. redress
redy a. ready AS rǣde
reed sb. advice, plan rǣd m.
reed sb. adviser A 665
reed a. red AS rēad
refresshen inf. refresh OF refreschier
refreyde pp. cooled down OF refreidier
reft pp. taken from; cf. **reven**
refuseded 3 pt. pl. disobeyed OF refuser
refut: refuge OF refuite
regalye: rule, authority OF regalie
regard: **at regard of**] in comparison with OF.
regioun: region OF region
registre: record OF.
regne: realm, rule, power OF.
regneth 3 pr. s. rules, reigns; **regnen** 3 pr. pl.; **regned** pp. OF regner
reherce, rehersin inf. rehearse, repeat OF rehercier
rehersyngys: repetitions
rejoysed 1 pt. s. refl. rejoiced
rejoysynge: cause of rejoicing OF resjoir
rekene inf. pay the reckoning AS gerecnian B 110
rekene inf. reckon
rekenynge: reckoning, account; **ther lyeth in rekenynge inne my sorwe for no thynge**] There is nothing owing me (in rekenynge) in my sorrow, i.e. sorrow has paid me in full Du 698-9; **maad our rekenynges**] paid our bills
rekke inf., 2 pr. pl. reck, care for AS reccean
rekne 1 pr. s. reckon; cf. **rekene**
relayes pl. relays, fresh sets of dogs OF relai
relees: cease; **out of relees**] without ceasing OF reles
relesse inf., 1 pr. s. release OF relaissier
releve: relieve OF relever
religioun: religion OF.
relikes: relics OF relique
remedies pl. remedies, cures; re-

medies of love; remedies of Ovyde; cf. Ovyde OF.
remembraunce: remembrance
remembre imp. remember OF remembrer
remembrynge: calling to mind
remenant, remenaunt, remenent: rest, remainder OF remenant
remes: realms OF reialmes
remewed pp. moved away
remoeve 2 pr. pl. subj. remove OF removoir
renagat: renegade Lat renegatus
reneye: deny faith; **reneyed** pp. OF reneier
renges: ranks, rows OF renc
renne inf. run, go; turn up B 125; **renneth, rennyth** pr. s.; **ronnen** 3 pt. pl.; **ronne** pp. AS rinnan
rennere: runner
rennyng: running
rennyth 3 pr. s. runs; cf. **renne**
renomee: renown OF renome
renoun sb. renown, glory OF renon
renoveleth imp. pl. renew OF renoveler
rente sb. income, tax, tribute OF.
rent 3 pr. s. rendeth; **rente** 3 pt. s.
rentynge: tearing AS rendan
repair sb. expense of repair OF repaire
repaire inf. return OF reparer
repeireth 3 pr. s. returns
repentaunce: repentance OF.
repentaunt: repentant OF.
repente inf. repent OF repentir
repleccioun: repletion OF repletion
repleet: replete, full OF replet
replicacioun, repplicacioun: means of reply OF replication
reporten inf. report OF reporter
reportour: reporter
repreeve: reproof OF reprueve
repreve inf. reproach, reprove OF reprover, 3 pr. s. reprueve
reproveable: blameworthy
reputacioun: reputation OF reputation
requere inf. seek, demand OF requerre
requeste sb. request OF requeste A 1204
rescous: rescue, attempt to rescue OF rescousse
rese inf. shake AS rǣsan
resigne: resign OF resigner
reson, resoun: reason, opinion, right OF raison
resonable: reasonable, sensible, endowed with reason OF.
resouneth 3 pr. s. resounds OF resoner
respit: respite, delay, time OF respit
respiten inf. respite, gain time; refuse An 259 OF respitier
reste sb. rest, repose; at reste] comfortable AS rest
reste inf. rest AS restan
resteles: restless
restoore 1 pr. s. restore OF restorer
restreyne inf. restrain OF restreindere
restynge place: dwelling
retenue: retinue, suite OF retenue
rethor: one skilled in rhetoric Lat rhetor
rethorik: rhetoric OF rhetorique
retourneth imp. return OF retourner
retournynge sb. return
retracciouns: retractions OF retraction
reule sb. rule of discipline OF reule
reulen inf. rule; refl. conform in conduct OF rieuler
reuthe,: pity; cf. **routhe**; cf. AS hrēow
reutheles: ruthless
reve: bailiff, agent of manor AS gerēfa
revelour: reveler OF reveler
reven inf. rob, take away, bereave AS rēafian
rever: river OF riviere
revers: reverse OF.
revith: reaves, snathes; cf. **reven**
revolucioun: orbit of stars
reward: regard OF.
rewde: rude OF rude

rewe sb. row AS rǣw f.
reweful: in sorrow
rewefulleste: most sorrowful
rewel-boon: whale-ivory; cf. OF rochal
rewen inf. rue, take pity AS hrēowan
rewles: rules
reyn sb. rain AS regn
reynes sb. reins OF rēne
Reynes: Rennes, a town in Brittany; clothe of reynes] linen cloth made in Rennes Du 255
reyneth 3 pr. s. rains
reysed pp. made expeditions A 54 cf. Ger reisen
reysed pp. raised; cf. Icel reisa
riall, rialle: royal OF reial
ribandye: ribaldry OF ribanderie
ribbes: ribs AS rib
riche: rich people A 248 AS rīce
richely: richly
richesse: wealth; the porter of Venus OF richesse
riden inf. ride, go on expedition; **riden** pr. pl., pt. pl., pp.; **rit** pr. s., pt. s; **rood** 3 pt. s. AS rīdan
right sb. justice AS riht
right a. right; as it were right] exactly as if it were
right ad. right, exactly; right thus] just so
rightful: righteous
rightwisnesse: righteousness
rihte: right
rihtful: rightful, proper
riotour: rioter OF.
rist pr. s. riseth; cf. **ryse**
rit pr. s. rideth; pt. s. rode; cf. **riden**
ro: roe, deer AS rā
robbour: robber OF robeor
roche: rock OF roche
the Rochele: La Rochelle, a town in France
rode sb. complexion AS rudu f.
rode sb. rood, cross AS rōd f.
Rodogone: Rhodogune, daughter of Darius, slew her nurse who counseled remarriage
rodok: robin AS rudduc
rody: ruddy, rosy AS rudig
rof 3 pt. s. stabbed
Roger: Ruggiero degli Ubaldini, enemy of Ugolino B 3606
roghte 3 pt. s. affected, cared; cf. **recche** E 685
roial a. royal OF.
roialliche ad. royally
rokke: rock
rolleth 3 pr. s. turns over OF roller
rollynge p. rolling, shifty
romaunce: romance, story OF.
Romaunce of the Rose: an allegorical French love poem entitled "Le Roman de la Rose," written by Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Menn, in the thirteenth century. In the poem the loved one is a Rose in a beautiful garden; the lover attempts to pluck the Rose, but is hindered by allegorical figures, as Shame and Jealousy. Chaucer speaks of translating this, (Prol. to Leg. G. W.) and a translation, part of which may be by Chaucer, is included in all complete editions of his works
Romayn a. Roman
rombled 3 pt. s. shouted out; cf. Du rommelen
romed pp. roamed; cf. **romen**
romen inf. roam, walk; **rome** 1 pr. pl.; **romede** 1 pt. s.; **romed** pt., pp. orig. uncert.
Romulus: founder of Rome, son of Rhea Silvia
romynge p. roaming
ronge 3 pt. s., pl. rang; cf. **rynge**
ronne pp. run, completed; cf. **renne**
Ronyan: Ronan, a saint
rood 3 pt. s. rode; cf. **riden** A 169
roode: rood, cross AS rōd
roode-beem: beam supporting rood or cross, over choir entrance
roofe: roof AS hrōf
roore inf. roar AS rārian
roos 3 pt. s. rose; cf. **ryse**
roost sb. roast OF rostir
rooste inf. roast; **rosted** pp.
roote: root; astronomical property of birth of rich; **rootes** pl. roots; given tabulated quantity, be-

longing to a fixed date, from which calculations are made AS rōt

ropyn pp. reaped AS ripan

roreth 3 pr. s. roars; cf. **roore**

rose and lilie: flowers of martyrdom and chastity G 27

rosted pp. roasted; cf. **rooste**

rote sb. fiddle A 236 OF rote

rote sb. repetition; by rote] by heart orig. uncert.

roten, roton a. rotten; cf. Icel rotinn

Rouchestre: Rochester

roughte: 3 pt. s. recked, cared; cf. **recche**

rouketh 3 pr. s. cowers orig. uncert.

roule: roll, ramble, gad OF rouler

Rouncivale: some cell in England dedicated to the Blessed Mary of Rouncevaux

rouncy: hackney, nag OF ronci

rounde a. round OF ronde

rounde ad. round, easily B 2076

roundele: roundel, a form of French verse, rhyming abb abab abb abb (and in other ways) OF rondel

route sb. rout, throng, company OF.

route inf. snore Du 172 AS hrūtan

route inf. assemble B540 OF route

routhe: pity; cf. hrēow

routhelees: ruthless

rowe: row AS rǣw f.

rowes pl. rays, beams

Rowlande: Roland, nephew of Charlemagne and chief of his Twelve Peers. He died at Roncesvalles through the treachery of Ganelon, q. v.

rownde: round OF ronde

rowne inf. whisper AS rūnian

rowthe: ruth, sorrow, pity; cf. AS hrēow f.

rubeis, rubyes: rubies OF rubis

rubriche: rubric, rule OF rubriche

Ruce: Russia

rude: common OF.

rudeliche: rudely

ruest: takest pity AS hrēowan

Rufus: Greek physician of Ephesus

rum, ram, ruf: alliterative sounds

rumbel, rumbul: rumbling, noise, rumor; cf. Du rommelen

rused pt. s. roused, got away AS hreosan "rush"

Russell: the fox OF roussel "red"

russhyng p. rushing; cf. Du ruischen

Russye: Russia

ruste inf. rust AS rustian

ruyne sb. ruin OF ruine

ryal: royal OF reial

ryche: rich AS rīce

rychesse: wealth OF richesse

ryde inf. ride; **ryden** 1 pt. pl.; cf. **riden**

ryght sb. right; by ryght] justly AS riht

ryght a. right, proper

ryght ad. exactly

rym sb. rime OF rime

ryme inf. rhyme; **rymeyed** pp. OF rimer

rynge: ring, resound; **ryngen** 3 pr. pl.; **ronge** 3 pt. s., pl. AS hringan

rynges sb. rings

rype: ripe, mature AS rīpe

ryse inf., pr. pl. subj. rise; **rist** pr. s.; **roose** pt. s.; **rysen** pp. AS rīsan

rysen pp. risen; cf. **ryse**

ryte: rite Lat ritus

ryve inf. tear, cut open; cf. Icel rīfa

ryver: river OF riviere

S

sacrifie imp. sacrifice OF sacrifier

sacrifise sb. sacrifice OF sacrifice

sad, sadde: patient, serious, sober AS sæd

sadel: saddle AS sadol

sadel-bowe: saddle-bow

sadly: seriously, deeply, plentifully

sadnesse: patience

saffron inf. to give color and savor, as with saffron OF safraner

saffroun: saffron OF safran

saille inf. sail AS seglian

Salamon, Salomon: Solomon

salewede 1 pt. s. greeted OF saluer
Saluces: Saluzzo
salue inf. greet; **salueth** pr. s. OF saluer
saluyng: greeting
salwes: willow twigs, osiers AS sealh m.
Samaritan: the woman of Samaria
Sampson, Sampsoun: Samson, a judge of Israel, famous for his supernatural strength. As a Nazarite, he drank no wine. After his betrayal by Delilah, when his strength returned he caused himself to be led between the two main pillars of the temple of Dagon, in which the lords of the Philistines were feasting. By thrusting the pillars out of place he caused the temple to fall, slaying himself and thousands of the Philistines; cf. Judges xvi.
sangwyn sb. sanguine color, blood-red cloth OF sanguin
sangwyn a. ruddy
sanz: without
sapience: wisdom OF.
Sapor: the first, king of Persia 240-273. He defeated Emperor Valerian, and in turn was defeated by Zenobia and Odenatus
sarge: serge OF serge
Sarray: Sarai, a city near the Caspian Sea, seat at one time of the Tartar kings
sarvant: servant OF servant
Satalye: Attalia or Adalia, in Asia Minor, captured in 1357
sate pt. s. sat; cf. **sitten**; **doune on knees sate]** knelt; **sate hyr ful lytel at herte]** troubled her little
Sathanas: Satan
Saturne: the planet Saturn was supposed to exert an evil influence
Saturnus: the father of Jupiter and the gods. His planet was supposed to have a baleful influence upon men and events, causing strife and trouble
satyn: satin OF satin
sauf: saved, excepted OF.
saufly: safely
saugh 3 pt. s. saw; cf. **se**
sautrie sb. psaltery, a stringed instrument OF psalterie
savacyoun: salvation OF sauvacion
save: the herb sage Lat salvia
save prep., conj. save, except OF sauf
save inf., 3 pr. s. subj. save; **savith** 3 pr. s.; **savedest** 3 pt. s.; **saveth** imp. pl. OF sauver
savedest 3 pt. s. saved; cf. **save**
saveour: savior OF sauveur
savith 3 pr. s. saves; cf. **save**
savoure inf., imp. taste OF savourer
savouris: smells Pf. 274
savynge p. keeping inviolate
savynge prep. saving, except
sawcefleem a. covered with pimples OF saus "salt" + flemme
sawe sb. saying, maxim AS sagu f.
sawe 1 pt. s. saw; cf. **se**
sawse: sauce OF sausse
say pt. s. saw (probably Chaucer's regular form, as it occurs in rime); cf. **se**
sayede pt. s., pp. said; cf. **saye**
saylynge a. sailing, used in ships
sayn, sayne inf. say; cf. **seye**
sayn pp. seen; cf. **se**
Sayne: the Seine
scabbe: scab Icel skab
scalle: scab; cf. Icel skalli "bald"
scalled pp. scabby
scapen inf. escape OF escaper
scarsly ad. economically A 583; scarcely B 3602
scathe sb. misfortune; **that was scathe]** that was a pity Icel skaði f.
Scedasus: a native of Bœotia, in Greece
schap: shape AS sceap
schape pp. ordained AS scieppan, pp. secapen
sche: she
scherte: shirt AS scyrte
scherynge: shearing AS sceran
schete inf. shoot AS scēotan
schethe sb. sheathe AS scēð f.
schette 3 pt. s. shut; cf. **shetten**

schewid: shown; cf. **shewe**
schop 3 pt. s. refl. prepared; cf. **shape**
schryne: shrine AS scrīn
schul 3 pr. pl. shall; cf. **shal**
science: knowledge, science OF.
Scipioun: (1) Publius Cornelius Scipio Africanus, Roman general and conqueror of Carthage in Africa, B. C. 202, whence his name Affrikan. (2) Cornelius Scipio Æmilianus Africanus Minor, the hero of the Third Punic War, whose dream of his grandfather by adoption, the elder Africanus, is discussed by Macrobius, q. v.
Scithero: Cicero; cf. **Tullius**
Scithia: Scythia, ancient country around the Black Sea
sclat: slate OF esclat
sclaundre sb. slander, evil report OF esclondre
sclendre: slender; cf. ODu.
Scogan: tutor to Henry IV's sons
scole: school, style AS scolu f.
scole-matere: subject for scholastic disputation
scoler: scholar, student
to scoleward: on the way to school
scoleye inf. go to school. It was customary for poor students to beg money for their education, even going from door to door; cf. OF escoler "teach"
scorpioun: scorpion OF.
Scot sb. a common Norfolk name for a horse
Scotlandward: towards Scotland
Scottes: Scots
scourging: scourging, disciplining OF escorgier
scriveyn: scrivener OF escrivain
se, see sb. sea AS sǣ f.
se, seen, sen, seene, sene, seon inf. see; **seen** pr. pl; **sawe, saugh, say, seigh, seye, seyen, seyide, syen** pt.; **sayn, sene, seye, seyn** pp. AS sēon
seche inf. seek AS sēcan
secounde: second OF seconde
secre a. secret OF.
secree sb. and ad. secret, secretly OF.
secreely: secretly
secreenesse: secrets
sed sb. seed AS sǣd n.
sede inf. seed, give seed AS sǣdian
seege: siege OF siege
seeke: sick AS sēoc
seel sb. seal, print OF.
seelde a. seldom AS seldan
seen inf., 2 pr. pl. see; cf. **se**
seene inf. see; cf. **se**
seet 3 pt. s. sat; cf. **sitten**
seeth 3 pt. s. boiled AS sēoðan
seettes: seats; cf. Icel sæti
seigh pt. s. saw; cf. **se**
seillynge p. sailing
sein inf. say; cf. **seyn**
seint a. holy OF saint
Seint Beneit: St. Benet or Benedict, the founder of the Benedictine order of monks, died 542
Seint Edward: Edward the Confessor
Seint Jame: St. James, whose body was carried in a rudderless ship to Compostella, in Galicia
Seint Julian: St. Julian was famous for providing good things for his votaries
Seint Maure: St. Maur, a disciple of St. Benet
Seint Nicholas: St. Nicholas, the boy-bishop and patron of school boys, showed marks of piety when in the cradle
Seint Thomas: St. Thomas à Becket killed at Canterbury
Seint Thomas of Ynde: The Apostle Thomas died in India. He is thus called to distinguish him from St. Thomas of Canterbury
Seinte Loy: Loy < Eloy < Eligius. St. Eligius refused to take the oath when testifying, therefore an oath in his name was very mild, practically no oath, being, once removed, no oath at all
Seinte Poules: St. Paul's Cathedral
Seintes Legende of Cupide: The Legend of Good Women
seintuarie: saint's relic OF saintuaire
seistow 2 pr. s. sayest thou; cf. **seye**

seith 3 pr. s. says; for **mysseith** 3 pr. s. slanders B 3112; cf. **seye**

sek, seke a. sick AS sēoc

sekeenesse: sickness

seken inf., pr. pl. seek, visit; **soghte** 3 pt. s. subj.; **soughte** pp.; **sowhte** pt. pl. AS sēcan

selde: seldom AS seldan A 1539

seled: sealed OF seeler

selle inf. sell AS sellan

selleres pl. merchants

selve a. own, very, same AS self B 115

selven: self

sely: happy, harmless, weak, silly, simple, kind, good AS sælig "happy"

semblant: appearance OF.

seme inf. seem; cf. Icel sæma "honor"

semelieste: handsomest

semely a. likely, comely

semely ad. properly, in a seemly manner

semycope sb. short cape OF.

semyly: comely

semynge: appearance, seeming; to my semynge] as it seems to me

Semyramus: Semiramis, queen of Babylon, famous for wantonness and imperial reign

sen inf. see; cf. **se**

senatour: senator OF.

sendal: cloth of silk for lining OF cendal

sende inf. send; **sent** pt., pp.; **synde** 3 pr. s. subj. AS sendan

sene inf. and pp. to see; cf. **se**

Senec: Seneca, Roman philosopher

senge inf. singe; **seynd** pp. AS sengan

sent pt. s. sent; cf. **sende**

sentement: the feeling of love OF sentiment

sentence: meaning, sense, order; hy sentence] lofty sentiment OF.

seon inf. see; cf. **se**

Septe: Centa, in Morocco

Septemtrioun: North

septure: sceptre OF sceptre

sepulture: sepulchre OF.

Serapioun: a mediæval physician, probably of the twelfth century A 432

sercele: circle, sphere OF cercle

serchen 3 pr. pl. search, haunt OF cerchier

Sereis: Ceres, goddess of harvest

Sergeant of the Lawe: sergeant-at-law, the highest rank at the common-law bar

sermonyng: preaching

sermoun: discourse OF sermon

serpent: the hydra of Lerna B 3295 OF.

sertys: certes OF certes, pl. f. of cert

servage: service, bondage OF.

servant, servaunt: servant, lover OF.

serve inf. serve, help; **servede** 1 pt. s. OF servir

servise: performance, concert Du 302 OF.

servitute: servitude OF.

servyn inf. serve

servysable: helpful

servyse: service OF servise

serwaunt: servant

serye: series, connected argument

serys: sirs OF sire

sese: seize; **sesed** pp. OF seisir

seson, sesoun sb. season OF saison

sessiouns sb. pl. meetings of the Justices of the Peace OF session Lat sessio

set 3 pr. s., pp. set; cf. **sette**

sete pt. sat; cf. **sitten**

sethe inf. seethe, boil AS sēoðan

sette inf., 3 pr. s., pp. set; **set** 3 pr. s., pp.; set a cappe] make a fool of; wel sette] seemly, suitable AS settan

seuretee: security, pledge OF seurte

seven: seven; seven sterris] the seven planets

seventhe: seventh

sewed 3 pt. s. followed OF sivre, 3 pr. s. suit

sewes: broths AS sēaw "juice"

sexteyn: sexton < sacristan

sey inf., 3 pr. pl., imp. tell; cf. **seye**

seyde 3 pt. pl. said; cf. **seye**

seydyn 3 pt. pl. said; cf. seye
seye pp., f. seen; cf. se
seye, sey, seyn, seyne, sayn, sayne inf. say, tell; seith 3 pr. s.; seistow 2 pr. s.; sey 3 pr. pl.; seysthow 2 pr. s.; sayed, sayede pt. s.; seyde 3 pt. pl.; seydyn 3 pt. pl.; sey imp.; sayede pp. AS secgan
seye 1 pt. s. saw; cf. se
seyen 3 pt. pl. saw; cf. se
Seyes: Ceyx, husband of Alcyone, q. v.
seyide 1 pt. s. saw; cf. se
seyl sb. sail AS segl
seyn inf. say; cf. seye
seyn pp. seen; seyn biforn] foreseen; cf. se
seynd: singed, broiled; cf. senge
seyne inf. say; cf. seye
seyne pp. seen; cf. se
seysthow 2 pr. s. sayest thou; cf. seye
shadde 3 pt. s. poured AS scādan
shadewe, shadwe sb. shadow, shade AS sceadu
shadwed pp. shaded
shaftes: spears, lances; shaft of arrow A 1362 AS sceaft
shake pp. shaken AS scacan
shal 1 pr. s. shall; schul, shalle, shalt, shul, shulle pr.; shuldest, shulde pt. AS sceal
shalle 1 pr. s. shall; cf. shal
shaltow 2 pr. s. shalt thou; cf. shal
shame s. shame, modesty; doo shame] put to shame AS scamu f.
shamefast: shamefaced, modest AS scamfæst
shamefastnesse: bashfulness, modesty
shamen inf. shame
shameth 3 pr. s. thee shameth] thou art ashamed; cf. shamen
shap sb. shape AS sceap Pf 373
shape inf. refl. plan, prepare; shapen 2 pr. pl.; shoope pt. s.; shape, shapen pp. fated
shaply a. fitted
shappe 1 pr. s. devise, form
sharpe a. sharp AS scearp
sharpe ad. sharply
shave pp. shaved AS scafan
shedde 3 pt. s. shed AS scādan
sheef: sheaf AS scēaf
sheeld: shield AS scield m.
sheeldes: crowns, coins worth 3s. 4d. A 278
sheene: bright, beautiful AS scēne
shende inf. shame, ruin, corrupt, scold; shente 3 pt. s.; shent pp. AS scendan
shene sb. shining AS scēne
shene a. bright
shene ad. brightly
shent pp. corrupted A 2754; scolded B 1731; cf. shende
shente 3 pt. s. put to shame; cf. shende
sheo: she
shepherde: shepherd AS scēaphyrde
shepne: sheep fold AS scypen
shere sb. shears AS sceara
shere inf. shear, cut AS sceran
sherte: shirt AS scyrte
shet pp. shut; cf. shetten
shete: sheet AS scēte
shetere a. shooter, used for bows
shetten inf. shut; shette pt. pl.; shet, shette pp. AS scyttan
shewe inf. show; sheweth 3 pr. s.; shewede 3 pt. s.; shewid pp. AS scēawian
sheweth pr. s. sheweth . . . youre servaunt] your servant presents; cf. shewe
shifte inf. distribute, ordain AS sciftan
shilde 3 pr. s. prevent, shield AS scyldan
shille: shrill AS scyl
shipe sb. pay An 193 AS scipe
shipe sb. ship An 194 AS scip n.
shipnes: stables, sheds AS scypen
shire sb. county; shires poss. A 15 AS scīr f.
shirreve: reve or governor of a shire; modern sheriff
shiten pp. foul, defiled
sho: shoe AS scō
shode: temple of the head AS scēada
shof 3 pt. s. shoved AS scūfan
sholder-boon: shoulder blade

sholdred pp. shouldred
sholdysthow 2 pr. s. shouldest thou; cf. shal
shon pt. s. shone; cf. shyne
shonde sb. shame AS sceond
shoo: shoe; **shoon** pl. AS scō
shoope, shope pt. s. planned, disposed; cf. shape
shorte a., pl. short; at shorte wordis] in short AS scort
shorte inf. shorten AS sceortian
shortly: quickly, briefly
shot sb. arrow or crossbow bolt AS scot
shoures: showers AS scūr
shoutynge sb. shouting orig. unkn.
showvyng sb. shoving
shredde 3 pt. s. sliced AS scrēadian
shrewe sb. shrew, cursed fellow
shrewe 1 pr. s. curse, consign to the devil
shrewed a. cursed
shrewednesse: cursedness
shrighte 3 pt. s. shrieked
shryfte: shrift, confession; as shryfte wythoute repentaunce] as one who confesses but does not repent AS scrift
shrympes: shrimps, dwarfs; cf. AS scrimman "dry up"
shryned pp. enshrined AS scrīn
shul pr. pl. shall; cf. shal
shulde pt. s. should; cf. shal
shuldest 2 pt. s. should; cf. shal
shuldres pl. shoulders AS sculdor
shulle, shullen pr. shall; cf. shal
shyne sb. shin AS scinu
shyne inf. shine; **shon** pt. s. AS scīnan
shyveren 3 pr. pl. shiver, go into fragments
sich: such, that is what AS swylc
sicknes: sickness, disease
Sidyngborne: Sittingbourne, forty miles from London, between Rochester and Canterbury
sighte sb. sight AS ge-sihð f.
signe sb. sign OF.
significavit: a writ of excommunication beginning "significavit nobis venerabilis frater"
sike a. sick AS sēoc
sike inf. sigh; **siketh, sykyth** 3 pr. s. AS sīcan
siker a. certain, safe AS sicor
siker ad. certainly
sikerer: surer, more regular
sikerly: certainly
sikernesse: safety, security
siketh, sikith 3 pr. s. sighs; cf. sike
sikirly: surely
sikly ad. badly, with ill will
siknesse: sickness
Silla: for her lover Minos betrayed her father Nisus
similitude: likeness, presentation, statement OF.
simple a. unaffected OF.
sinne sb. sin, evil AS synn f.
sippe inf. sip, taste AS sypian
Sir Gy: Sir Guy of Warwick, a Middle English metrical romance
Sir Lybeux: Lybeaus Disconus, a Middle English metrical romance
Sir Percyvell: Sir Percival
sith ad. then C 869 AS siððan
sith, sithe conj. since
sithe sb. scythe AS sīðe
sithes pl. times; ofte sithes] oftimes AS sīð
sitten inf. sit; **sitte** pr. s.; **sate, seet, sete** pt. AS sittan
sitthe: afterwards
sittyngest: most suitable
sixte: sixth
skalis: scales OF escale
skapid pp. escaped OF eschaper
skars: scarce OF escars
skarsly: scarcely
skarsytee: scarcity
skile: cause, reason, profit; pl. fancies; cf. Icel skil
skilful a. reasonable; skilful placis that bere charge] in important situations
skillis: reasons; cf. skile
skipte pt. s. jumped; cf. skyppe
sklendre: slender, slight (?) Du slinder
Skogon: Henry Scogan, tutor of the sons of Henry IV, and friend of Chaucer
skorned 3 pt. s. scorned; ne skorned less] nor one that scorned less

skornere: scorner
skorneth 3 pr. s. scorns OF escorner
skornynge: mocking
skriked pt. pl. shrieked; cf. Icel skrækja
skylful: skilful
skylfully: advantageously
skyppe inf. skip; cf. Icel skopa
slake inf. desist, cease, end AS slacian
slakke a. slow AS slæc
slaughtre: slaughter; cf. Icel slātr "slain flesh" AS sliht
slawe pp. slain; cf. sle
slayn pp. slain; cf. sle
sle, slee inf., imp. slay; **sleen** 2 pr. pl.; **sleeth** 3 pr. s.; **slough, slowgh, slow** pt. s.; **slawe, slayn, sleyn** pp. AS slēan
sledere a. slippery AS slidor
sleen 2 pr. pl. slay; cf. sle
sleer: slayer
sleeth 3 pr. s. slays; cf. sle
sleightę sb. trickery, craft; cf. Icel slægð
slen inf. slay; cf. sle
slep sb. sleep AS slǣp m.
slepe inf. sleep; **slepes** 3 pr. s.; **slepen** 3 pr. pl; **sleep, slepe, slepte** 3 pt. s.; **sleptin** 3 pt. pl. AS slǣpan
slepy: sleep-causing A 1387
slepynge sb. sleep
sleves: sleeves AS slēf
sleyn pp. slain; cf. sle
slider: slippery AS slīðor
slight: cunning; cf. Icel slægð
slit 3 pr. s. slideth; cf. **slyde**
slitte inf. pierce, slit AS slītan
slogardrie: sluggishness, laziness orig. uncert.
slogardye: sloth
slong pt. s. slung AS slīngan
slough 3 pt. s. slew; cf. sle
slouthe: sloth AS slæwð f.
slow, slowgh pt. s. slew; cf. sle
sluttissh: slovenly
slyde inf. slide, slip past; **slit** 3 pr. s. AS slīdan
slye: clever, crafty, neat; cf. Icel slægr
slyghte: sleight
slyk: sleek orig. uncert.
smal ad. little AS smæl
smale, smalle: slender, small
smel sb. odor; cf. L Ger smelen "smoke"
smelle 1 pr. s. smell
smellynge: smelling
smert sb. smart, pain; cf. AS smeortan
smerte a. sharp, painful
smerte ad. sharply
smerte inf., pt. s., impers. smart, pain, grieve
smok: smock, dress AS smocc
smoklees: without even a smock
smoot 3 pt. s. struck; cf. **smyte**
smothe a. smooth AS smōð
smothe ad. smoothly A 676
smylere: smiler, hypocrite; cf. Dan smile
smylyng: sb. smiling
smyte inf. smite; **smyt** pr. s., imp.; **smoot** pt. s.; **smyten** pp. AS smītan
smyth: blacksmith AS smið
snewed 3 pt. s. snowed AS snāw
snowte: nose; cf. Icel snȳta
snybben inf. rebuke; **snybbed** pp.; cf. Icel snubba
so ad. so, so much AS swā
so conj. so that
so ferforthly: to the extent of
sobre: sober, serious OF.
sobrely ad. sadly, seriously
sobtil: crafty, searching OF sobtil
sobyrly: soberly
soche: such
socour sb. succor OF.
Socrates: Athenian philosopher, famous for tranquillity under affliction
sodeinly: suddenly OF sodain
sodeynliche: suddenly
soffren: suffer OF sofrir
softe a. gentle AS sāfte
softe ad. softly, timidly
soghte 3 pt. s. subj. examined; cf. **seken**
sojourne inf. tarry OF sojorner
solaas, solas: comfort, amusement OF solas
solempne a. solemn, festive OF.
solempnely ad. in an important manner A 274
solempnytee: ceremony

soleyn: alone, mateless OF solein
solitarie: alone Lat solitarius
som: some, a certain AS sum
somdeel, somdel: somewhat, to some extent
somer: summer; somerys poss.; someres game] (mid-) summer's play D 648 AS sumor
som-kyn: some kind of
somme: some
somme: sum; sommes pl. sum of money OF somme
somnour, somonour: a summoner, whose business was to summon delinquents to the ecclesiastical courts OF semoneor
somtyme: once, formerly
somwhat ad. somewhat
sond: sand AS sand m.
Sonday: Sunday
sonde: message AS sand f.
sondry a. sundry, various
sone sb. son; sone of Eve] child of Eve AS sunu m.
sone ad. soon, quickly AS sōna
songe sb. song, poem AS song mn.
songe 3 pt. s. sang; **songen** pt. pl.; cf. **synge**
sonken pp. sunken; AS sincan
sonne: sun AS sunne f.
sonne-beem: sunbeam AS sunnebēam
sonnest: soonest
soo so; who soo] whoso, whosoever AS swā
soold pp. sold AS sellan
soond: sand AS sand m.
soone: soon AS sōna
soong 1 pt. s. sang; cf. **synge**
soor sb. sore AS sār n.
soore a. sore AS sār
soore ad. sorely AS sāre A 148
soote a. sweet AS swēte
sooth a. true AS sōð
sooth pley quad pley: true jest is ill jest
soothe: truth; soothe to seyn] to speak truthfully AS sōð n.
soothfastnesse: truthfulness
soothly: truly
sope: sop, bread or cake soaked in a liquid < AS sūpan "to sup"
soper: supper OF soper
sophistrye: sophistry OF sophisterie
sophyme: sophism, trick of logic OF soffime E 5
sorcerie: sorcery OF.
sorofull: sorrowful AS sorgful
sorowe: sorrow AS. sorg f. gen. sorge
sorowfull: sorrowful
sort: lot, fate OF.
sorwe: sorrow AS sorg f.
sorwen 3 pr. pl. sorrow AS sorgian
sorwful: sorrowful
sorwynge s. sorrowing
sory: sorry; sory grace] misfortune AS sārig
soryest: sorriest or sorest
soth, sothe sb. truth AS sōð
sothe a. true
sothefastnesse: truth
sothely, sothly: certainly, truly
sought pp. sought; cf. **seken**
souked pp. sucked AS sūcan
soukynge: sucking, nursing
soule: soul AS sāwol f.
soun, soune sb. sound OF son
sounde inf. heal AS sundian
soupen inf. sup OF soper
souple a. soft, flexible OF.
soure: sourly AS sūre
sours: source, spring OF sourse E 49
soutere: cobbler AS sūtere
southe sb. truth; cf. **soth**
southren: southron, from the south of England, as opposed to north England where alliterative poetry was most practiced
Southwerk: Southwark, south of the Thames, across London Bridge
soutil ad. subtly, finely OF.
soutiltee: device OF.
soutyle: subtle
souvenaunce: remembrance OF.
soveraynetee, sovereynetee: sovereignty OF sovrainete
sovereyn a. great, excellent, chief OF sovrain
Sowdan: Sultan
Sowdanesse: Sultana
sowded to pp. confirmed in OF souder

sowe: sow; **sowes** poss. s. AS sugu
sowed pp. sewed AS siwian
sowen inf., pp. sow AS sāwan
sowhte pt. pl. sought; cf. **seken**
sowled pp. given a soul to
sowne inf. sound, play upon, be in harmony with, tend to; **sowneth** 3 pr. s. tends to B 3158; **sownynge** p. OF soner
sownynge p. sounding Du 925; in harmony with, conducing to A 275
sowple: obedient OF souple
sowre: sorely
sowres sb. pl. sowres, bucks of the fourth year OF sor
space: space, length of time; as of so litel space] considering the brevity of his service A 87; course A 175 OF espace
spadde 1 pt. s. sped; cf. **spede**
Spaigne: Spain
spak 3 pt. s. spoke; cf. **speke**
spanne: span, measure of distance AS spann
sparcle sb. spark < AS spearca
spare inf. refrain, cease, fail AS sparian
sparhauk: sparrow-hawk AS spearhafoc
sparkes pl. sparks AS spearca
sparkles: sparks, live coals
sparklynge p. sparkling
sparre sb. beam orig. uncert.
sparth: battle-axe orig. uncert.
sparwe: sparrow AS spearwa
Spayne: Spain
spaynel: spaniel OF espagnol
speaken inf. speak; **speake** 3 pr. s.; cf. **speke**
speces pl. species OF especes
speche: speech, conversation, voice AS spǣc f.
spectacle: eyeglass OF.
spede inf., 3 pr. s. subj. succeed, prosper; **spadde, spedded** 3 pt. s.; **sped** pp.; **sped, spedde** imp. AS spēdan
spedeful: profitable
speede imp. prosper; cf. **spede**
speeke 3 pr. subj. speak; cf. **speke**
speere: sphere; eighte speere] eighth sphere, sphere of the fixed stars OF espere
speke inf., 3 pr. s. speak; **speeke** 3 pr. s. subj.; **spak** 3 pt. s.; **speken** 3 pt. pl.; **spoken** pp. AS specan
spekyng sb. speech
spelle: story, tale AS spell n.
spende inf. spend; **spenden** 1 pr. pl.; **spente** 3 pt. s.; **spent** pp. AS spendan
spere sb. spear AS spere
sperhauk: sparrow-hawk AS spearhafoc
speris: spheres OF esperes
sperme: seed OF esperme
spiced a. seasoned (by hypocrisy) OF espicier
spicerye: spices OF espicerie
spille inf. spill, upset, destroy, spoil; **spille** 3 pr. s. subj. may die B 285; **spilt** pp. AS spillan
spirite: spirit; **spiritis** pl. OF espirit
spitously: without pity OF despitos
spitte 1 pr. s. spit AS spittan
spore sb. spur; paire of spores] women then rode astride A 473 AS spura
spousaille: espousal, wedding OF espousailles
spoused pp. espoused, wedded
spradde 3 pt. s. spread; cf. **sprede**
sprede inf. spread, open; **spradde** 3 pt. s.; **sprad** pp. AS sprǣdan
sprengen inf. sprinkle, scatter; **spreynd** pp. AS sprengan
spreynd pp. sprinkled; cf. **sprengen**
sprong: 3 pt. s. sprang up; cf. **sprynge**
spryng flood: spring tide, when the sun and moon are in opposition
sprynge inf. spring, grow; **sprong** 3 pt. s.; **spronge** pp. AS springan
spryngyng sb. source
spurne: kick AS spurnan
spynnynge: spinning; spynnynge on feeld] she spun while keeping the sheep AS spinnan
Squier: squire, one who attends on a knight OF escuier
squiereth 3 pr. s. squires, escorts
squyrelis, sqwireles: squirrels OF esquireul

staale 3 pt. s. stole upon; cf. **stelen**

staat: state, condition OF estat

stable sb. stable OF estable

stable a. permanent, constant

stablissed pp. established OF establir

Stace ôf Thebes: the "Thebaid" of Statius, in which these details are not given A 2294

staf: staff AS stæf

staf-slynge: a sling fastened to a stick to get greater power; cf. F eslingue

stal 3 pt. s. stole; cf. **stelen** C 610

stalke sb. stalk, stick; cf. the parable of the mote and the beam in Matt. vii. 3 A 3919; cf. AS stela "handle"

stalke inf. creep, move slowly AS stalcian

stalle sb. stall AS steall mn.

stampe pr. pl. pound AS stempan

stant 3 pr. s. stands; cf. **stonde**

stape pp. far gone, advanced AS steppan

starf 3 pt. s. died; cf. **sterve**

starke: strong, severe AS stearc

starlyng: starling AS stærline

startlyng: moving rapidly AS steartlian

stat: state, estate OF estat

statue: statue, portrait OF.

stature: height OF estature

statut sb. statute; **statutis** pl. OF.

staves poss. pole's AS stæf

stede place; in **stede**] instead AS stede

stedefast, stedfaste: steadfast

stedfastnes: constancy

steedes: steeds AS stēda

steere: rudder, guide AS steora, steor

steerelees: rudderless

stekid pp. stuck AS stician

stel: steel AS stēl

stelen inf. steal; **staale, stal** 3 pt. s.; **stole** pp. AS stelan

stellefye inf. set among the stars

stemed 3 pt. pl. gleamed AS stēman

stenten inf. stop, cease; **stent** pt. s., pp. AS styntan

stepe a. bright AS stēap

stere: rudder, guide AS steor, steora

sterlynges: coins sterling AS stærlinc

sternely: sternly AS styrne

sterres pl. stars; **sterres sevene**] this may mean the seven planets known to the ancients, or, as the planets have been mentioned, the seven stars in Ursa Major, or the Great Dipper; or possibly the seven stars of the Pleiades Du 823 AS steorra m.

sterry: starry

sterte sb. start; at a **sterte**] at one leap; cf. AS sturtan

sterte inf., pt. s. start, leap; **stirte** 3 pt. s.

sterve inf. die, perish; **starf** 3 pt. s. AS steorfan

steven sb. sound; appointed time; at unset **stevene**] unexpectedly AS stefn

steyre: stair, degree AS stæger

stibourne: stubborn < AS styb "stub"

stid: stead AS stede

stidefast, stidfast: steadfast

stierne: stern AS styrne

stif a. strong, deep AS stīf

stifly: unremittingly

stiketh 3 pr. s. sticks; **stiked** 3 pt. s. stuck; **stiked** pp. stabbed AS stician

stikke sb. stick, twig AS sticca

Stilbon: the planet Mercury (an error for Chilon, an embassador, from Mercury's being messenger of the gods)

stile: style, manner of writing E 41, F 105 OF stile

stillatorie: still F distillatoire

stille: still, quiet AS.

stinte inf. stop, leave off; cf. **stenten**

stire inf. stir, incite AS styrian

stiropes: stirrups AS stīgrōp "mounting-rope"

stirte 3 pt. s. started; cf. **sterte**

stod pt. s., **stoden** pt. pl. stood; cf. **stonde** Pf 98

stodye: industry in study; cf. OF estudie

stok: stock, race; **stokkes** pl. stumps AS stocc

stoke inf. stab Du stoken

stole pp. stolen; cf. **stelen**

stomblen 3 pr. pl. stumble

ston, stoon: stone AS stān m.

stonde inf. stand, be placed; **stant, stondeth** pr. s.; **stod, stood** pt. s.; **stoden** pt. pl.; **stonde** pp.; **stonden at]** agree to A 778 AS standan

stone: stone; pl. jewels Du 979

stongen pp. stung; cf. **stynge**

stoor: amount, store, stock; **telle no stoor]** take no stock in; **no stoor]** not at all OF estor

storial a. historical, storied

stot sb. a cob, strong horse

stounde: hour, time; **that harde stounde]** that cruel time AS stund f.

strake inf. move; cf. AS strīcan "go"

Stratford atte Bowe: a Benedictine nunnery at Stratford, London E. The French taught here would be Anglo-French, the business, legal, and court language of England. It differed from Paris French

straughte 3 pt. pl. stretched; cf. **strecche**

straunge: strange, foreign, distant; **made it straunge]** affected to stand aloof OF estrange

strawe pr. s. strew AS strewian

Strayte of Marrok: Straits of Morocco, Gibraltar

strecche inf. stretch; **straughte** 3 pt. pl. AS streccan

stree: straw AS strēaw

streem: stream AS strēam

streen sb. strain, progeny AS strēon

streght, streight a. straight AS streht

streight ad. straight

streit a. narrow, strict, little, close OF estreit

streite pp. drawn B 4547; cf. **strecche**

streite ad. tightly

streme: stream, current; ray, beam Pi 94, A 1495 AS strēam

strengis: strings, stringed instruments AS streng

strenger: stronger

strengthe: strength, might AS strengðu f.

strepe, streepe inf. strip; AS strȳpan

strete: street, road AS strǽt f.

streyne inf. constrain, urge OF estraindre

strif: strife OF estrif

strike sb. hank (of flax); cf. AS strīcan

strike pp. struck AS strīcan

strogelest 2 pr. s. strugglest orig. uncert.

strokis pl. strokes, blows orig. uncert.

stronde: strand, beach AS strand

stronge a., pl. strong AS strong

stronge ad. strongly

stroof 3 pt. s. contested, vied; cf. **stryve** OF estriver

strook sb. stroke AS strācian

stroong: strong AS strong

stroyere: destroyer OF destruieor

struglyng: struggling

stryve inf., imp. strive, vie; **stryven** 1 pr. pl.; **stroof** 3 pt. s. OF estriver

stubbel goos: the graylag goose

stubbes: stumps AS stub

studie sb. study; cf. OF estudie

studie inf., 2 pr. s. study, deliberate; **studieth** imp.

sturdely: sturdily, boldly OF estourdi "sturdy"

sturdiness: sternness

sturdy: stern, harsh

stuwe sb. fish pond in which fish were kept to ensure a supply of food; cf. OLG stouwe

style sb. mode of writing E 18 OF style

style sb. stile, used to cross a barrier F 106 AS stigel

stylle a. still AS stille

Stymphalides: a Greek maiden

stynge inf. sting, pierce; **styngith** 3 pr. s.; **stongen** pp. AS stingan

stynte inf., 1 pr. s., 3 pr. s. subj.

stop; **styntyn** 3 pt. pl.; **styntynge** p.; cf. **stente** AS styntan
styrte 3 pt. s. jumped; cf. **sterte**
styth sb. anvil AS stīð
styward: steward AS stīweard
stywes: brothels OF estuve
subgetz: subjects OF souzgiet
subjeccioun: obedience, lover's service OF subjection
submytted pp. agreed Lat submittere
substaunce: income, property OF substance
subtil, subtill a. subtle, intricate OF sobtil
subtilitee: craft
subtilly: cleverly, slyly
subtyl: finely woven
subtylytee sb. cunning
suburbes: suburbs OF suburbe
succede inf. succeed Lat succedere
successiouns: successions OF succession
successour: successor OF successour
suete: sweet AS swēte
suetnesse: sweetness AS swētness
suffice inf. suffice, be capable of OF soufire, pr. p. soufisant
suffisance, suffisaunce: competence, wealth
suffisant, suffisaunt: sufficient
suffisantly: sufficiently
suffise inf. suffice; imp. be content; cf. **suffyse**
suffrable: able to suffer, patient OF soufrable
suffraunce: patience OF sufrance
suffraunt a. patient Du 1009
suffren inf. allow, suffer OF sufrir
suffysaunce: independence
suffyse inf. suffice OF soufire
suggestioun: charge of crime OF suggestion
sugre: sugar OF sucre
sum: some AS.
sumdel: some part
sumtyme: once, formerly
sundery: sundry AS syndrig
sunne: sun AS sunne f.
sunnys: sun's
superfluitee: excess OF superfluite
supersticious: superstitious OF superstitieux
supplicacioun: petition OF supplication
surcote: outer coat OF.
surement: security
suretee: feeling of security OF seürte
surgerye: surgery OF surgerie
surmountide of pp. surpassed in OF surmonter
surplys: surplice OF surpliz
Surrien: Syrian
Surrye: Syria
sursanure: a wound festering inward, though outwardly healed OF sorsaneüre
surte: security OF seürte
surveiaunce: surveillance OF.
Susanne: Susanna, accused of wanton conduct by two elders of the Jews in Babylon, was saved by Daniel's cross-examination of her traducers
suspecious: suspicious OF suspicieus
suspect sb. suspicion OF suspect
suspect a. suspected, suspicious, ominous
susteene inf. sustain, maintain; **sustened** pp. OF sustenir
suster, sustir: sister; **sustren** pl. cf. Icel systir
sute: suite, single pattern OF siute
suyte: material OF suite
swal 3 pt. s. swelled; cf. **swelle**
swalwe sb. swallow AS swealwe Pf 353
swap imp. swipe, sweep, cut; cf. **swappe**
swappe inf. strike off; **swapte** 3 pt. s. fell; **swap** imp. orig. uncert.
swapte 3 pt. s. fell suddenly; cf. **swappe**
swatte 3 pt. s. sweated; cf. **sweete**
swche: such; swche seven as in the welkene sterris bee] the seven stars (planets) which are in the sky AS swylc
sweche: such
sweete inf. sweat; **swatte** 3 pt. s. AS swǣtan

sweigh: sway, motion; cf. Icel sveigja

swelle inf. swell; swal 3 pt. s. AS swellan

swelt, swelte 3 pt. s. languished, perished orig. uncert.

swelwe 3 pr. s. swallow AS swelgan

swęmyn 3 pr. pl. swim AS swimman

swepe inf. sweep orig. uncert.; cf. AS swāpan

swerd: sword AS sweord n.

sweren inf. swear; swoor 3 pt. s.; swore, sworen 3 pt. pl.; swere imp.; swore, sworn pp. AS swerian

sweryng sb. swearing

swete sb. sweetheart AS swēte Du 831

swet, swete a. sweet

swetely: sweetly

swetnesse, swettenesse: sweetness AS swētness

Swetonius: Suetonius, Roman historian, wrote a history of the Cæsars

swety: sweaty < AS swāt m.

sweven: dream, vision AS swefen

swich: such AS swylc

swifte pl. swift AS swift

swithe: quickly AS swīðe

swogh sb. swoon < AS swōgan "sigh"

swolwe inf. swallow AS swelgan

swoolen pp. proud; cf. swellen

swoor 3 pt. s. swore; cf. sweren

swoot sb. sweat AS swāt n.

swore 3 pt. pl., pp. swore, sworn; cf. sweren

sworn pp. cf. sweren; although he had it sworn] though he had done all to the contrary

swough: a sough, sighing of wind < AS swugian

swouned pt. s. swooned; cf. swowne

swow sb. whistling of wind; cf. AS swugian

swowe sb. swoon

swowne sb. swoon, fainting spell; a-swowne] in a swoon Du 123 AS swōgan

swowne inf. swoon; swouned 3 pt. s.; swowned pp.

swownynge: fainting

swyn: swine AS swīn

swynk sb. labor, toil AS swincan

swynken inf. labor, toil

swynker sb. toiler, worker

swythe: quickly; fayre and swythe] good and quick AS swīðe

syde sb. side; other syde] other hand P 102 AS sīde

syen 3 pt. pl. saw; cf. se

syghte dat. sb. sight AS gesiht

sygne: sign, mark; wikked sygne] mark or trace of wickedness OF signe

syk sb. sigh AS sīcan

syk a. sick; for syk] for (being) sick AS sēoc

syke a. used as sb. sick man Pf 104

sykernesse sb. safety, security AS sicorness

syklatoun: a costly cloth OF ciclaton

sykys sb. sighs < AS sīcan

sykyth 3 pr. s. sighs; cf. sike

sylvyr: silver AS seolfor

symphonye: a kind of tabor, or drum OF.

symple a. modest, innocent, unaffected OF simple

symplesse: simplicity

Symplicius Gallus: a Roman

syn: since AS siððan

synde 3 pr. s. subj. send; cf. sende

synge inf. sing; soong, song, songe pt. s. songen pt. pl. songe pp. AS singan

syngynge sb. singing

synke inf. sink AS sincan

synne: sin AS synn f.

Synoun: Sinon, a Greek spy, who delivered the wooden horse to the Trojans (poss. case)

syre: sire, lord

sys cynk: six-five, a (lucky) throw in dice OF six, cinq

syth: time; sythis pl. AS sīð

sytte 3 pr. s. sits in, dwells in; imp.; cf. sitten

syttynge p. sitting

sywynge a. proportionate, suiting OF sivre

T

taak imp. take; cf. take

taas sb. heap, pile OF tas

Tabard: the Tabard Inn took its name from the tabard on its sign. The tabard was a sleeveless or short-sleeved coat worn by knights over their armor. The peasantry also wore a coat known as a tabard OF.

table sb. table; flat surface Dn 779; table dormant] a permanent table, in contrast to the "bord" which was laid across trestles A 353; tables pl. backgammon OF.

tabourryn 3 pr. pl. beat the tabor, drum OF taborer

tabyde inf. to abide

tacche sb. defect OF tache

tacord inf. to accord

taffata: thin silk, taffeta OF taffetas

taffraye inf. for to affraye, frighten

taille sb. tally; by taille] on credit OF.

take inf. take, seize, take place; toke, tooke pt. s.; tooken pt. pl.; taak imp.; take pp.; take kepe] take heed, observe AS (late) tacan

takel: tackle, arrows; cf. Du takel

taken pp. received as obligatory D 77; cf. take

tale: account; telle no tale] say nothing AS talu f.

talen inf. tell tales

talighte: to alight, descend

talle: docile, serviceable, tall orig. uncert.

tamende inf. to amend

tanoyen: to annoy

Tantale: Tantalus, punished in Hades by being forced to stand up to the chin in water which receded from his lips as often as he attempted to quench his constant thirst; above his head hung fruits which always eluded his grasp

tapite inf. cover with tapestry (?) OF tapeter < tapet

tappe sb. tap OF tape

tappestere: barmaid AS tæpestre f.

tapycer sb. tapestry maker, upholsterer OF tapissier

tare: a weed OF tare

tareste inf. to arrest

targe: target, kind of shield OF.

tarien inf. tarry, keep waiting; taried 3 pt. s.; tarie imp. AS tergan "provoke"

tarraye inf. to array

Tars: clooth of Tars] a kind of silk

tart: sharp AS teart

Tartarye: Tartary, probably referring to all except the western part of what we know as Russia

Tartre: tartar; oille of Tartre] cream of tartar

taryen inf. delay

taryynge sb. tarrying, delay

tassaille inf. assail

tassay inf. to assay, test

tassemble inf. to assemble

tassoille inf. to absolve

taughte 3 pt. s. taught, preached; cf. teche

Taur, Taurus: the Bull, a sign of the zodiac (reference to May 3)

taverne: tavern OF.

taverner: keeper of a tavern OF tavernier

tawht pp. taught; cf. teche

tayl: tail, stalk AS tægl

taylage: taxing by count OF taillage

teche inf. teach; taughte 3 pt. s. AS tǣcean

techyng sb. teaching A 518

teene sorrow, grief AS tēona m.

teeres, teeris: tears AS tēar

tel, tellen inf. tell, relate; telles, telleth pr. s.; tellen 3 pr. pl.; tolde pr. s., pp.; toold pp. AS tellan

telles pr. s. tell; cf. tellen

tembrace inf. to embrace

temperaunce: moderation OF.

temperede 3 pt. s. tempered

tempest sb. storm OF tempeste

tempest imp. trouble, distress

temple: an inn of court; in London there were an Inner and Middle Temple, occupied chiefly

by barristers and law students A 567 OF.

temporel: temporal OF.

tempre: temperate OF tempré

tempte inf. make trial of OF tempter

tenbrace inf. to embrace B 1891

tendirly: tenderly OF tendre

tendite inf. to endite

tendre a. tender; fastidious C 517 OF.

tendrely: tenderly

tendure inf. to endure

tendyte inf. to endite, set down Pf 119

tene sb. vexation, sorrow AS tēona m.

tene a., pl. ten Dn 420 AS tȳn

tente sb. tent; **tentis** pl. OF tente

tentifly: attentively OF attentif

tercelet: male falcon; **tercelettes** pl. OF.

terciane a. tertian Lat tertianus

tere s. tear; **teris** pl. AS tēar m.

Termagaunt: one of the idols whom the Saracens were supposed to worship

terme: set time, space of time; a division of the signs of the zodiac in mediæval astrology F 1288; terme day] appointed day; in terme] in scientific terminology C 311; he had at command all the cases and the decisions which had been handed down since the time of William the Conqueror A 323 OF.

termyne inf. determine, set OF terminer

tersel: male eagle; cf. **tercelet**

terslet, tercelet: male hawk; **tersletis** pl.

Tertulian: Tertullian, church father, wrote treatises on chastity and modesty

tescape inf. to escape

teschape inf. to escape

tespye inf. to espy

testeres: head-pieces OF testiere

Teuta: a queen of the Illyrians

Tewnis: Tunis; for the toune of Tewnes] for all the wealth of Tunis

texpounden inf. to expound

text: quotation, proverb; **text**, printing on page; text and glose] both text and margin, i.e., both main panels and borders of the walls Du 333 OF texte

textueel: able to draw nice distinctions in explaining terms OF.

teyd pp. tied AS tīgan

thabsence: the absence

thalighte = **thee alighte** 3 pt. s. alighted upon

thamendys: the amends

than: then AS þanne

thank, thanks sb. his thankes] if he might have his way about it AS þanc

thanke 1 pr. s. AS þancian

thanne: then AS.

thapostel: the apostle (Paul, 1 Cor. vii.)

thar ad. there AS þār, þǣr

thar pr. s. impers. needs AS þearf

tharray: the array OF.

thassay: the assay

thassemblee: the gathering

that rel. pron. what, that which AS þæt

that conj. as much as B 1036

that conj. used expletively after rel. pron. or ad. conj.

thaughe: though AS þēah

thavys: the advice

thavysyoun: the avisioun, the vision

the pron. thee

the inf. prosper; cf. **thee**

Thebans a., pl. Polynices and Eteocles, sons of Œdipus, king of Thebes. Polynices, the younger, dissatisfied with his inheritance, beseiged the city with his friends, under his father-in-law, Adrastus, king of Argos. All, save the latter, were slain An 60

Thebes: ancient city in Greece

thee, theen inf. prosper AS þēon

theech, thee ich: may I prosper!

theef: thief AS þēof m.

theek for **thee ik**: may I thrive (northern form)

theen inf. thrive; cf. **thee**

thef, thefe: thief AS þēof
thefeect, theffect: the effect, result
thei pron. they
thei conj. though AS þēh
thegle: the eagle
Thelophus: Telephus, wounded by spear of Achilles, and healed by its rust; a king of Mysia
themperour: the emperor
then conj. than AS þanne
thencens: the incense
thenchauntementz: the enchantments
thencrees sb. the increase
thendyting: the enditing
thenken inf. think; **thynke** 1 pr. s.; **thought** 3 pt. s. AS þencan
thenne: then AS þanne
thennes: thence AS þanon
thentente: the intent
thenvyouse a. the envious
Theodora: beloved of Algarsif
theoff: thief AS þēof
Theofraste: Theophrastus, Aureolus Liber de Nuptiis, a mediæval Latin tract against marriage
ther, there: there, where AS þær
ther as: where
ther: their
theraboute: around it
thereafter: thereafter, after that
therbifoore, therbiforn: beforehand
thereto: moreover, besides Du 678
therfore: therefore
therinne: therein
therof: concerning that
theron: thereupon
theroute: out there, in the open
therthe: the earth
therto: thereto, to it, also, and in that
therupon: immediately
therwith: therewith, thereupon
therwithal: thereupon
theryn, therynne: therein, thereon
thes: these
theschewyng: the eschewing, avoidance
Theseus: the great legendary hero of Attica. He freed the Attic roads from robbers; destroyed the Cretan minotaur with the aid of Ariadne, daughter of the Cretan king, whom he deserted on the voyage home; helped Hercules conquer the Amazons, whose queen, Antiope, here called Hippolyta, became his queen; he made Athens a city, and greatly improved its government
Thesiphus: Sisyphus, punished in Hades by the never-ending task of rolling a huge stone up a hill, down which it would constantly roll again. S and C, C and T, T and Th were constantly interchanged by scribes, hence the spelling
Thessalie: Thessaly, in northern Greece
thestaat: the estate, condition
thevys poss. thief's
thewed pp. mannered
thewes: qualities of mind AS þēawas m.
thexcellent a. the excelling
thider: thither AS þider
thiderward: thither
thies: these
thikke: thick, luxuriant; greves . . . thikke] groves abundant in AS þicce
thikke-herd: thick-haired
thikkere: thicker
thikkeste: thickest
thilke: that very AS þylc
thing: thing, property, good AS þing n.
thinke inf., impers. seem; **thought** 3 pt. s.; thoughte me] it seemed to me AS þencan
thinne: thin AS þynne
thirllethe 3 pr. s. pierceth; **thirled** pp. AS þyrlian
this for **thus** Du 710
this, thise pl. these Pf 540
this for **this is** (often **this is** should be read as **this**, for the metre) F 889
this al and som: this is the whole part, the sum total
Thisbe: beloved of Pyramus in Nineveh
tho pl. those AS þā
tho ad. then AS þā
tho conj. though; cf. Icel þō
thoccident: the occident, the west
thogh: though; cf. AS þēah

thoght sb. thought AS þōht m.
tholde: the old
thombe sb. thumb; thombe of gold] probably the reference is to the skill his thumb has gained in judging corn and flour, with a satirical reference to the proverb, "An honest miller has a thumb of gold" (Sk.) AS þūma
thonder sb. thunder AS þunor
thonderdynt: thunderclap
thonderynge: thundering AS þunrian
thonke 1 pr. s. thank; thonken pr. pl.; thonk imp. AS þonc
thonour: the honor
thoo: yet, still, then Icel þō
thorgh: through; wher thorgh] by means of which AS þurh
thorient: the orient, the east
thorisonte: the horizon OF orizonte
thorpis: villages AS þorp
thorw: through AS þurh
thought pt. s. thought; cf. thenke
thought 3 pt. s. impers. seemed; methought] it seemed to me; cf. thinke
thour, thourw: through AS þurh
thousande: thousand
thousent: thousand AS þūsend
thow pron. thou
thow conj. though Icel þō AS þēah
thral, thralle sb. slave, vassal AS þræl
thral a. subject, debased
thraste 3 pt. pl. pushed; cf. threste
thre: three AS þrī, þrēo f.
thre formes: Diana is called Luna in heaven; on earth, Diana and Lucina; and in hell, Proserpina
thred, threed: cord, thread AS þrǣd m.
thredbare a. threadbare
thredde: third AS þridda
thresshe inf. thresh AS þerscan
thresshfold: threshold AS þerscwald
threste inf. thrust, force his way; thraste 3 pt. pl.; cf. Icel þrysta
thretyng: threatening AS þrēatian
thridde: third AS þridda
thridde hevenes lord: Mars, the third sphere
thries: thrice
thrifty: wise, excellent (in vague sense) Icel.
thrilled pp. pierced; cf. thirllethe
thritty: thirty AS þrittig
throgh: through AS þurh
throng 3 pt. s. pressed AS þringan
throope: thorp, village AS þorp
thropes: villages
throte: throat; throtys pl. AS þrote f.
throwe sb. short period of time, moment AS þrāg f.
throwe inf. throw; throweth 3 pr. s. AS þrāwan
thrustel: thrush AS þrostle
thrustelcok: male thrush
thryes: thrice AS þriwa + s ad. suff.
thryve inf. prosper Icel þrifask
thurgh prep. through, by means of AS þurh
thurghfare: thoroughfare
thurgh-girt pp. pierced through
thurghout: throughout
thurst sb. thirst AS þurst
thursted hym 3 pt. s. impers. he thirsted
thurstil: thrush AS þrostle
thymage: the image
Thymalao: really Timoleon, son of Zenobia
Thymothee: Timothy, St. Paul's friend and disciple
Thymothee: Timotheus, a general of Antiochus
thyn: thine
thynke 1 pr. s. think; cf. thenken
thynne a. thin AS þinne
Tiburce: Valerian's brother
tidyng: happening, news AS tīdan
tidyves: tidy, a small bird (wren or titmouse) F 648
tikled pt. s. tickled
til prep. to (before vowel) AS til
til conj. until, till; til now late] until it became very late
tiptoon pl. tiptoes AS tā
tirannye: tyranny OF tirannie
tiraunt: tyrant OF.
tithes pl. the tenth part of the

produce or income of the people was payable for the support of the church and clergy, and was generally collected by the priest. Failure to pay could be punished by the lesser excommunication AS tēoða

titlelees: usurping

Titus: Livius, Roman historian, tells the story of Lucrece

to ad. too AS tō

to prep. to, for, as; hym to feete] at his feet; to creature] as a living being

to: till C M 239

tobreste 3 pr. pl. break in pieces; tobrosten pp. AS tōberstan

tobroke, tobroken: pp. broken in pieces AS tōbrecan

tobrosten pp. broken in pieces; cf. tobreste

to fore: before

toforn prep. before

toft sb. tuft OF touffe

togedere, togedres, togidre, togidres: together AS togædre

to-go pp. fled AS tō-gān

tohewen 3 pr. pl. hew to pieces; tohewe pp. AS tōhēawan

tok, toke pt. s. took; cf. take; it me tok] I took it Du 48

tokenynge sb. sign AS tācnian

tolde pt. s., pp. told; tolde of] cared for, held in regard; cf. tellen

tollen inf. take toll; tollen thryes] take thrice the proper toll AS toll

Tolletanes: Toledo, in Spain, was selected by order of Alphonso X of Spain, as the place for which astronomical tables should be calculated

tombe: tomb OF tombe

tombesteres: female dancers < OF tombeor

tomorn: this morning

to-morwe: tomorrow

tonge sb. tongue AS tunge

tonged pp. tongued

tonne: tun, barrel of wine, ale AS tunne

tonne-greet: as great as a tun or barrel

too sb. toe; toon pl. AS tā

too a. two AS twā An 153

too ad. to Pf 150

took, tooke pt. s. took, betook; tooke up] attracted, held; cf. take

toold pp. told; cf. tellen

toon pl. toes; cf. too

top sb. crown AS top

to-race 3 pr. pl. tear in pieces OF raser

torche: torch OF.

torente 3 pt. s. tore asunder; torent pp. AS tōrendan

tormentise: manner of torment OF.

tormentour: tormenter OF.

tormentrie: torment OF tormenterie

tormentynge: torture

torn sb. turn OF torn

tortuous: indirect, oblique, not rising directly Lat tortuosus

toshrede 3 pr. pl. cut into shreds AS screadian

toslyvered: split into pieces

totar pt. s. tore in pieces; cf. totere

totelere, totulour sb. a. tattler, tattling orig. uncert.

to-tere inf. tear to pieces (Christ's body, by swearing by the various members, as wounds, nails, eyes, bones, etc.) C 474; totar 3 pt. s.; totore pp. AS tōteran

tothyr: the tothyr = that other

to-tore pp. torn apart; cf. totere

touche 1 pr. s. mention; touchede pt. s. OF toucher

toumbe: tomb OF toumbe

toun, toune: town AS tūn m.

tour, toure: tower OF A 1030

touret: turret OF tourete

tourettes: rings A 2152

tourment 3 pr. s. subj. torment OF torment

tourne inf. turn OF torner

tourneyment: tournament OF torneiement

toverbyde: to survive

towaille: towel OF touaille

towardes: towards AS tōweard
towchid: concerned OF touchier
towgh: troublesome; make it towgh] be captious AS tōh
towne: town AS tūn m.
towonde 3 pt. s. broke in two AS wundian
to-yeere: this year
Trace: Thrace, in classic myth, the region north of Greece; later, what is now Eastern Rumelia
trace inf. follow OF tracier
trad pt. s. trod; cf. **trede**
tragedie: tragedy, tragic history, story OF.
traisoun: treason OF traïson
traitour: traitor OF.
traitourye: deceit OF traïtor
Tramyssene: Tremezen, Moorish kingdom in Africa
transmutacioun: transmutation, change OF transmutation
trappe sb. trap AS treppe
trappures: trappings for horses orig. uncert.
tras: procession OF trace
traunce: trance OF transe
travaille sb. struggle, labor, pains OF.
travaillynge p. travailing, in travail
trays: traces OF trais
trayteresse: traitress, deceiver traïtresse
traytore: traitor OF traitor
tre: tree AS trēow n.
trecherye: treachery OF trecherie
trede 1 pr. pl. tread; **trad** pt. s.; **troden** pp. AS tredan
tredefowel: cock
tredyng: treading
tree: wood; cf. **tre**
tregetoures: jugglers OF tresgeteor
trench: alley OF trenche
tresons: treasons OF traïson
tresoor, tresore sb. treasure OF trésor
tresorere: treasurer OF tresorier
tresoun: treason, betrayal OF traïson
trespace sb. trespass, infidelity OF trespas
trespace inf. do wrong to, offend OF trespasser
trespas sb. wrong, fault OF.
tresse: tress; **treses, tressis** pl. OF trece, tresse
tretable: affable, docile, receptive OF traitable
trete inf. narrate, discuss OF traiter
tretee: negotiation, business, treaty OF traitié
tretys sb. treaty, treatise AF tretiz
tretys a. well-formed OF tretis
trewe: true AS trēowe
trewely, trewly: truly
trewer: truer
treweste: truest
treye: trois, three OF trei
triacle: sovereign medicine, healing OF.
tribulacioun: tribulation OF.
tributarye: tributary, subject Lat tributarius
trice inf. pull away; cf. Sw trissa
trikled 3 pt. pl. trickled orig. uncert.
trille inf. turn; cf. Sw trilla
trippe inf. dance, move lightly; cf. Sw trippa
triste inf. 1 pr. s. trust; cf. Icel traust
Tristram: Tristram, lover of Isolt, queen of Cornwall
triumphe: triumph, triumphal procession Lat triumphus
troden pp. stepped; cf. **trede**
trompe: trumpet, trumpeter; **trompis** poss. OF.
tronchoun: broken staff of a spear OF tronchon
trone: throne OF.
Trophee: an error by Chaucer, who mistook the word "trophæa" (pillars) in the apocryphal Epistola Alexandri for the authority upon whose word Hercules' pillars in India and at Gades are believed to exist (Kittredge)
troste inf. trust; cf. **truste**; cf. Icel treysta
trotte imp. trot OF troter
trouble a. muddled, stupid OF trouble

trouthe: truth Du 998 AS trēowð f.
trowe inf. believe, trust; **trow** pr. s.; **trowen** pr. pl.; **trowed** pt. pl., pp. AS trūwian
trowthe: truth AS trēowð f.
trowyn inf. believe (in); cf. **trowe**
Troye: the city of Troy, in Asia Minor, the scene of the ten years' fighting between the Greeks and Trojans for the possession of Helen, stolen from her husband Menelaus by Paris, son of King Priam of Troy
Troylus: Troilus, brother of Hector and Paris, lover of and deserted by Cressida
trussed pp. packed OF trousse
truste pr. s., pl., imp. trust; cf. Icel treysta
truste 1 pr. pl. trust A 501
trwe: true AS trēowe
trye a. choice OF trié
tryne: triune OF trine
Tuballe: Jubal, "father of all such as handle the harp and pipe," is here confused with his half-brother, Tubal-Cain, "the forger of every cutting instrument of brass and iron"; cf. Gen. iv. 21, 22. The discovery of music by hearing the sounds of the anvil is sometimes attributed to Pythagoras, q. v.
tukked pp. with his long coat tucked up in his girdle LGer tukken
Tullius Hostillius: Roman general, a shepherd in youth
Tullyus: Marcus Tullius Cicero, Roman orator and patriot, model of rhetoric in the Middle Ages, author of "Somnium Scipionis"
tunge: tongue AS tunge f.
tunne: tun (met.) quality AS tunne
Turkeys a. Turkish
Turkye: Turkey
turneiynge: tourneying OF torneier
turnen inf. circle, turn; **turne** imp.; **turned** pp. OF torner
Turnus: a Latin king, overthown by Æneas
turtil: turtle-dove AS turtle
turwis: sods, turf AS turf
twelf: twelve AS.
twelf-monthe sb. a twelve-month
twenty: score; a twenty winter] twenty winters AS twēntig
twey, tweye: two AS twā, f. twēgen
tweyfoold: folded over, double
tweyn, tweyne: twain, two AS twēgen f.
twies: twice AS twiwa
twiste sb. twist, twig AS twist
twiste inf., pt. s. wring, torment
twyes: twice
twyned pp. twisted < AS twīn
twynkled 3 pt. s. twinkled AS twinclian
twynklyng, twynkelyng: twinkling
twynne inf., pr. pl. separate, depart; cf. AS getwinne "two and two"
tyde: tide, time AS tīd f.
tyden inf. betide
tydif: small bird; cf. **tidyves**
Tydius: one of the Seven against Thebes
tygre: tiger OF tigre
tykelnesse: danger, ticklish position
tyl: till
tyles pl. tiles AS tigele
tyme: time, season; **tymys** pl.; that tyme] at that time Du 794, 796 AS tīma
tyne: barrel OF tine
typet sb. hood, used as a portmanteau by the friars who sometimes degenerated into peddlars AS tæppet
Tyro Appollonius: Apollonius of Tyre, hero of a classic romance, used in Shakespeare's Pericles
Tysbe: beloved by Pyramus; cf. **Thisbe**
Tytus Lyvyus: Titus Livius, generally called Livy, a Roman historian

U

unable: incapable OF able
unavysed: heedless OF avise
unbokelen inf. unbuckle, open; **unbokeled** pp. OF boucler

unbounden pp. unbound, unmarried AS bindan
unbrent pp. unburnt AS bernan
unbuxumnesse: unsubmissiveness AS būhsum
unbynde inf. unbind AS bindan
uncerteyn: uncertain OF certain
uncommytted: not assigned, gratuitous
unconstreyned pp. unconstrained OF constreindre
uncoupylynge: uncoupling, releasing, letting loose OF couplen
uncowple: uncouple, spring
under-betten pp. kindled under AS bētan
undergrowe pp. under normal size AS grōwan
undermeles: afternoons AS undernmæl
undernethe: beneath, under + AS beneoðan
undernoom pt. s. received AS underniman
underpighte pt. s. stuffed under < ME underpicchen
understonde inf., imp., pp. understand AS understandan
understondynge sb. understanding, mind
undertake inf. affirm
undigne: unworthy OF digne
undo inf. reveal AS undōn
undren: undern, mid-forenoon, 9 A. M., or the time up to noon AS undern
undyr: under
unfeestlich: unfestive
unfeyned a. unfeigned
ungrobbed: undelved
unheele: sickness, misfortune AS unhælu f.
unknowe pp. unknown
unkonnynge: ignorant
unkorven: unpruned
unkouth: uncouth AS uncūð
unkynde: unnatural AS uncynde
unkyndely: unnaturally
unkyndenes: unkindness AS uncynde
unlikly: unlikely
unlyk: unlike E 156
unmeete: unfit AS unmæte
unneth, unnethe: scarcely AS unēaðe
unnethes: scarcely
unreprovable: not blameworthy
unresonable: unreasonable
unreste: restlessness
unright: ill, harm AS unriht
unsad: fickle AS unsæd
unsely: deceitful AS unsælig
unset: unappointed
unsoghte a. unsought, not sought after
unsowe pp. unsown
unto: until; in addition to
untrewe: untrue
untrouthe: deceit AS untrēowþ f.
untrussede: in disordered array
unwar: unexpectedly AS unwær
unweelde, unweeldy: unwieldy, weak
unwemmed: unspotted AS unwemmed < wam "spot"
unwist: unknown
unwitte: folly AS with
unwityng: without (her) knowledge F 936
unwityngly: unawares
unyolden: without having yielded
up prep. upon, up
up-so-down: upside down
upbreyde 3 pt. s. upbraid AS up + bregdan "draw"
upcaste pt. s. cast up
uphaf 3 pt. s. uplifted AS up + hōf < hebban
upon: against Du 1022; upon pain of A 1344
upon-land: in the country
uppe: up, left open
upplyght pp. plucked up ME up + plicchen
upright a. flat; upright, standing or sitting up Du 175 AS upriht
uprist 3 pr. s. upriseth
upriste sb. uprising AS uprīst
upronne pp. ascended
upsprynge inf. rise; upsprong pt. s.
upsprong 3 pt. s. sprang up; cf. upsprynge
upsterte 3 pt. s. started up
upyaf 3 pt. s. gave up
upyolden pp. yielded up

Urban: Pope at Rome, A. D. 222
usage: custom OF.
usance: custom OF.
used pt. pl., pp. was accustomed to; cf. usen
usen inf. accustom, use, enjoy; usyth 3 pr. s.; usyn 3 pr. pl.; usedest 2 pt. s.; used pt. pl., pp. OF user
us selven: ourselves
usshers: ushers OF uissier
usure: usury OF.
usurpe 1 pr. s. usurp, claim falsely OF usurper
usyn 3 pr. pl. are accustomed; cf. usen
usyth 3 pr. s. is accustomed; cf. usen

V

vacacioun: leisure OF vacation
vache: beast, cow OF.
valaunse: curtains of a bed; Venus valaunse] the borders of Taurus, the zodiacal sign called Venus' mansion; Mercury was thus near the end of Aries, which adjoins Taurus in the zodiac C M 145. Venus' bed is mentioned earlier, line 73
valence: cloth of Valence, near Lyon (?), or of Valenciennes lace (Belgium) Pf 272
Valentynys: Valentine's (Feb. 22)
Valeria: constant widow of Servius
Valerian: a Roman, converted by Cecilia
Valerie: "Epistola Valerii ad Rufinum de non ducenda uxore," a mediæval Latin tract against marriage
Valerius: V. Maximus, a Roman author B 3910
Valerye: cf. Valerie
valey: valley, vale OF valee
vanysshe inf. vanish OF vanir
vanysshynge sb. disappearance
vanytee: vanity OF vanite
variacioun: variation OF variation
varyaunce: variation OF variance
varyinge: variable, changeable, inconstant OF varier
vassellage: prowess OF.
vavasour sb. principal tenant of a great lord, therefore beneath a baron, who held land from the king. "The term applied to most middling land holders," (Tyrwhitt) OF vavassor
veluettes: velvets OF veluet
venerie sb. hunting OF venerie
Venerien: belonging to Venus
venquysseth 3 pr. s. vanquishes; venquysshed pp. OF vainquir
ventusynge sb. cupping (surgical operation) OF ventouser
Venus poss. Pf. 351
venym: venom, poison, pus OF venim
Venyse: Venice
venysoun: venison OF veneison
verdit: verdict OF veirdit
vermyne: vermin OF vermine
vernycle: a vernicle, a copy in miniature of the picture of Christ printed in blood upon the handkerchief or towel given by St. Veronica to Christ (on the way to Calvary) to wipe away the blood which flowed from the crown of thorns
verraily: verily
verray: very, true, truly OF verai
verrayment: verily
verrely: verily, truly
vers pl. verses OF vers AS fers
vertu: power, quickening force, virtue, ability; vertu expulsif] the power to expel what is harmful OF.
vertuous a. able, efficient, virtuous OF vertuos
vestimentz: vestments, garments OF vestement
Vesulus: Monte Viso
veyl sb. veil OF veile
veyn a. foolish OF vain
veyne sb. vein OF veine
veyne-blood sb. blood-letting
veze sb. blast < (?) AS fēsian "drive"
Via Apia: the Appian Way, a famous street running south from Rome
viage: voyage, expedition OF.
vicaire, vicarye: vicar, deputy OF.

vice: defect OF.
vicius: vicious OF vicious
victorie: victory OF victorie
vigilies sb. pl. meeting in the church yards upon festival evens. The women came in state, and those of the better sort had their mantles carried before them, partly for show, partly for comfort while seated at table OF.
vileyns a. evil, wicked
vileynye: abuse, ill manners, vulgar speech, disgrace OF vileinie
Vincent: Bishop of Beauvais, tutor of Louis IX, wrote "Speculum Historiale"
vinolent: filled with wine OF vinolentus
virelayes: virelais, ballads with a return of rime OF virelai
Virginia: daughter of Virginius
Virginius: Roman "knight"
virginitee: chastity OF virginite
visitaciouns: visits OF visitation
visite inf. visit OF.
vitaile, vitaille sb. victuals, food OF.
vitailled pp. provisioned
vitremyte: woman's cap (?)
Vitulo: Vitello, a Polish mathematician, *c.* 1254
voide: empty, solitary OF.
voirdit: verdict OF.
vois: voice OF vois
volage a. giddy OF.
vomyt: vomit OF.
vouchensauf: vouchsafe (verbal endings attached to vouchen) D 52 OF vochier
vouchesauf 2 pr. pl. grant, agree, vouchsafe (verbal endings attached to vouchen); **voucheth-sauf** imp.
vowe: vow OF vou
voyde a. free, void OF voide
voyden inf. void, expel, depart; **voyde** imp.
voys: voice OF vois
Vulcanus: Vulcan, god of fire, and blacksmith of the gods, was the husband of Venus
vyne: vine OF vigne
vyrelayes: virelais, songs after a French pattern, with return of rime OF virelais
vyse: vice OF vice

W

waast: waist; cf. AS wæstm "growth"
wade inf. go, descend AS wadan
wafereres: candy sellers OF waufre
wailen inf. wail, lament; **waille** pr. s.; **waillynge** p.; cf. Icel væla
waiten inf. wait, expect, think OF waitier
wake inf. remain awake, keep wake; **wook** 3 pt. s.; **wakyd** pp. AS wacian
wakepleyes: funeral games
wakyd pp. kept wake, caroused; cf. **wake**
wakynge: time of being awake
wakyr: watchful AS wacor
wal: wall AS weall
Walakye: Wallachia, a principality, now a part of Rumania
walet: wallet orig. uncert.
walked for **a-walking**: AS wealcan
walle: wall; **wallys** pl.
wallid pp. walled
walwe 1 pr. s. wallow; **walweth** 3 pr. s.; **walwed** pp. AS wealwian
Walys: Wales
wan: pale AS wann
wandrynge sb. traveling AS wandrian
wang-tooth: cheek-tooth, molar AS wangtōð
wanhope sb. despair AS wan + hopa
wanne pt. s. won; cf. **wynne**
wante inf. want, lack, be absent Icel vanta
wantowne a. wanton, wild AS wan + togen
wantownesse: wantonness, extravagant mannerism
wantrust: suspicion
wantynge of blyndnesse: cæcitate carens, by principle of opposites, an etymology of Cecilia
wanye inf. wane AS wanian

war a. wary, cautious, aware AS wær
war 3 pr. s., 2 imp. refl. look out, make way AS warian
warde: keeping, custody AS weard
wardecors: body guard OF wardecors
wardeyns: guardians OF wardein
Ware: town in Hertfordshire
ware sb. goods, wares AS waru
ware a. aware AS wær
ware imp. refl. beware AS warian
warente: protect OF warantir
warice: protect, cure OF warir
warie 1 pr. s. curse AS wergian
warished pp. cured
warme: warm AS wearm
warne inf. refuse, warn; **warnede** pp. AS warnian
warreyist 2 pr. s. makest war upon OF werreier
waspes poss. pl. wasps' AS wæps
wasshe pp. washed AS wæscan
wast sb. waste OF.
wastel-breed sb. bread made from the finest flour OF wastel "cake"
water: by water he sente hem hoom] he made them walk the plank, to swim home AS wæter
waterlees a. out of water
watering: watering place; this was at the second milestone on the road to the shrine of St. Thomas à Becket
Watte: Wat or Walter
watyr: water
wawe: wave orig. uncert.
waxe inf. grow; **wax** 3 pt. s.; **waxen** pp.; cf. **wexen** AS weaxan
wayk: weak Icel veikr
wayle: wail; cf. Icel væla
waylyng sb. wailing
waymentynge: weeping, lamentation OF waimenter
wayten inf. watch, observe, care for; **wayted** pt. OF waitier
webbe sb. weaver AS webba
wedde sb. to wedde] as a pledge AS wedd
wedden inf. wed; **weddede** 3 pt. s. AS weddian
weddynge: wedding AS weddung
wede sb. clothing AS wēod
weder: weather AS weder
wedercok: weather-cock
wedewehed: widowhood
wedewys pl. widows
wedlok: wedlock AS wedlāc
wedres: storms
weede: clothing
weel ad. well AS wel
weelde, weelded 3 pt. s. control, manage; cf. **welde**
weex 3 pt. s. waxed; cf. **wexe**
weilawey interj. alas!
weked: wicked AS wīcan "yield"
wel a. fortunate, contented; **wel was hym]** he rejoiced
wel ad. more; **wel ofter]** more often
welawaye interj. alas!
wel-bigoon: pleased, fortunate
welde: weld, a plant used in dyeing AS woald
welde inf. wield, keep control of; **weelde, weelded, welte** 3 pt. s. AS wieldan
wele sb. weal, welfare, good fortune AS wela
wele ad. well
wele 1 pr. s. will; cf. **wille**
welfarynge: thriving, prosperous
welful: beneficent
welk 1 pt. s. walked
welked pp. dried up Du welken
welkene, welkne: the heavens, the sky AS wolcen
welle sb. well, spring, source; **welle-stremes** well-springs AS wella
welnyeghe: welnigh
welte 3 pt. s. wielded; cf. **welde**
wem: harm, blemish AS wam
wemen pl. women AS wīfman
wemmelees: stainless
wenche: girl, wanton AS wancol "unstable"
wend pp. supposed; cf. **wenen**
wende 1 pt. s. weened, supposed; cf. **wenen**
wenden inf. travel; **wende** pr.; **went** pt., pp. AS wendan
wenen inf., 3 pr. pl. ween, suppose, imagine; **wenestow, wenyst** 2 pr. s.; **wende** pt. s.; **wenden**

pt. pl.; wene 3 pr. s. subj.; wend pp. AS wēnan
wenestow 2 pr. s. weenest thou; cf. wenen
wengis: pl. wings Icel vængr
went sb. path Du 398 AS wend
wente 3 pt. pl. went; cf. wenden
wenyst 2 pr. s. suppose, imagine; cf. wenen
weopeth 3 pr. s. weeps; cf. wepe An 169
wepe inf. weep; weopeth, wepyth pr. s.; weep 3 pt. s. AS wēpan
wepene, wepne: weapon AS wǣpen
wepynge sb. weeping
wepyth 3 pr. s. weeps; cf. wepe
werche, wirche inf. work, perform; worcheth 3 pr. s.; wroghte pt. s.; wroght, wrought pp. AS wyrcean
were sb. weir, fish-trap AS wer
were sb. doubt; cf. OLG were "disorder"
were inf. wear; werestow 2 pr. s.; wered 3 pt. s. AS werian
were inf. defend A 2550 AS werian
were pr. s. subj. must have been
werestow 2 pr. s. do you wear; cf. were
werk sb. work; werkes pl. deeds, works, paintings AS worc
werken inf. work, act; werketh imp. pl. dispose of AS wircan
werkyng: behavior, action, works
werm: worm AS wyrm
werm foul: worm-eating birds
werne inf. refuse permission to AS warnian
werne 3 pt. pl. were
werre sb. war, service AS werre
werre ad. worse AS wiers
werreyen inf. war against, make war; werreyed pp. OF werreier
wers, werse: worse AS wyrsa
werte sb. wart AS wearte
wery: weary AS wērig
wessh, wesshe 3 pt. s. washed; cf. wasshe
weste sb. west; by weste] westward AS west
weste inf. go westward Pf 266
weste ad. west
Westlumbardye: West Lombardy
wete a. wet AS wǣta
wete inf. wit, know AS wǣtan
wette 3 pt. s. wet
wex sb. wax AS weax
wexe inf. grow, become; weex, wex, wexe pt. s.; wexen pt. pl.; wexynge p. AS weaxan
wexynge p. waxing, growing; cf. wexe
wey: way, path; do wey] lay aside; wey ner went] highroad nor footpath; by al weyes] in all things AS weg
wey to blynde: cæcis via, an etymology of Cecilia
weyen inf. weigh; weyest, weyeth pr. s.; weyeden pt. pl. AS wegan
weyke: weak; cf. Icel veikr
weylaway interj. alas!; so weylawey] alas!
weyve inf. turn aside, abandon, give up AF weyver
wham: whom
whan: when AS hwanne
what: whatever AS hwæt
what! interj. what! how! why!
wheel: wheel (of Fortune) A 925; cf. whele AS hwēol
wheither: whether, which of two AS hwæðer
whele s. wheel; the everturning wheel was the symbol of the goddess Fortune Du 643 AS hwēol
whelkes pl. pimples AS hwylca
whelpe: whelp, puppy AS hwelp
whenne, whennes: whence AS hwanne
wher: whether
wheras: where that, where
wherfore: why; for any cause C 216
wherinne ad. in which
wher-so: wheresoever, whithersoever
wher-thorgh: by means of which
wherto: why, for what purpose Du 669
wherwith: by means of which
whete: wheat AS hwǣte m.
whether, whethir: whether
whette: whet, sharpened AS hwettan

which for who Du 96 AS hwilc
which: what, what sort of, such; which a] how great a, what a
whider: whither AS hwider
while sb. AS hwīl f.
while: as long as
whiles: while; the whiles] while Du 151
whilhom, whilom: upon a time, once AS hwīlum
whippe: whip; whippis pl. orig. uncert.
whippeltre: cornel-tree, or dogwood
whirle inf. whirl; cf. Icel hvirfla
whistelynge sb. a whistling sound AS hwistlung
whistlynge p. whistling
whit a. white AS hwīt
White: a translation of the name Blaunche. Blanche was the wife of John of Gaunt, Earl of Lancaster. She died Sept. 12, 1369, at the age of 29. John of Gaunt is the "man in black," who mourns for her Du 947
whitnesse: whiteness
whoe, whoo: who; whoo is] who is it that Du 181 AS hwā
whos: whose Pf 419
whyne inf. whinny AS hwīnan
whyte lylye: the white lily was the token of the perpetual virginity of Mary B 1651
wight sb. person, man AS wiht f.
wight a. active; cf. Icel vīgr
wighte sb. weight AS wiht
wiht: person; cf. wight
wikke a. wicked, unhappy, hard, grievous; cf. AS wīcan
wikked a. wicked, evil; wikked nest] Oliver le Mauny (Malni) of Brittany, said to have betrayed, with du Guesclin, Pedro of Spain
wikkedly: evilly
wikkednesse: evil
wil sb. will, desire AS willa
wil 3 pr. s. wills, desires; cf. wille
wilde: wild; wilde fyr] Greek fire, difficult to extinguish AS wilde
wildely: wildly
wile: skill AS wīl f.
wilful ad. wilfully
wilfulhed: presumption
wilfulnesse: wilfulness
wilkyn: diminutive of will
will, wille sb. desire, willingness; good will] good will, free consent Du 116 AS will
wille inf. desire, wish, will; wele 1 pr. s.; wil 3 pr. s.; wilte 2 pr. s.; woldest, wolt 2 pr. s.; wole 3 pr. s.; wold, wolde pt. s., pl., subj.; wolden pt. pl.; wolde pp. AS willian
willynge sb. will, desire
wilnen inf. desire; wilnest 2 pr. s.; wilned pt. s.; cf. wille sb. AS wilnian
wilte 2 pr. s. wilt; cf. wille
wimpul: wimple, the headdress of a nun, covering head and neck AS wimpel
wintres poss. winter's AS winter
wirche inf. work, assist AS wyrcean
wirkyng sb. actions
wis a. wise AS wīs
wis ad. certain; as wis] as certain (it is) F 1470
wis 1 pr. s. know (used in expression "I wis, ywis") iwis, ywis = AS gewiss "certainly
wisdome: wisdom AS wīsdōm m.
wise sb. manner, fashion AS wīse f.
wiseste: wisest
wisly: truly
wisse inf. instruct, tell; wysse 2 pr. subj. AS wissian
wissely: wisely, certainly
wisshe 1 pr. s. wish AS wȳscan
wist pp. known; wiste 3 pr. pt. s. know, knew how; wistest 2 pr. s. thou knowest; cf. witen
wit sb. wit, sense, reason, judgment AS witt
wite inf. blame; cf. wyte
witen inf. to know, to wit; wiste, woost, woot, woste, wot, wote pr.; wiste pt. s.; wist pp. AS witan
with: with meschance] misfortune upon (her)!; with sorwe] sorrow on you! AS wið
withalle: withal, moreover
withdrawe inf. draw back, refuse, withdraw AS wið + dragan

withholde, witholde pp. engaged, employed by; retained A 511 AS heoldan
withinne: within AS wiðinnan
withoute, withouten: without, besides AS wiðūtan
withseye, withseyn inf. withsay, oppose, renounce AS wiðsecgan
withstonde inf. oppose AS wiðstandan
withynne: within
witnesse imp. bear witness AS sb. witness
witte sb. wit
wityng: knowing, knowledge
wlatsom: loathsome AS wlǣtta "loathing"
wo sb. woe, sorrow, grief AS wā
wo-bigon: woe-begone AS wā + bigān
wod: wood, a plant used in dyeing blue Fa 17 AS wād
wode sb. wood AS wudu m.
wode a. mad; cf. **wood** AS wōd
wodebynde: woodbine AS wudubindæ
wodedowve: wood-pigeon
wofuller: more woeful
wol ad. well, full Pf 644
wold, wolde, wolden pt. s., pl. would; cf. **wille**
wolde pp. desired; cf. **wille**
woldest 2 pr. s. wouldst; cf. **wille**
wole 3 pr. s. will; cf. **wille**
wolle sb. wool AS wulle f.
wolt, wolthow, woltow 2 pr. s. wilt; cf. **wille**
womanly ad. in a womanly manner
wombe: the belly, womb AS wamb f.
womman: woman; **wommen** pl. women AS wifmann
wommanhede: womanhood
wonder sb. marvel, wonder, anxiety AS wundor
wonder a. wondrous
wonderly ad. wonderfully
wondeth 3 pr. s. wounds; cf. **wounde**
wondre inf. wonder; **wondred, wondreden** pt. pl.; **wondred** pp. AS wundrian
wondres pl. wonders
wondrynge: wondering
wondyr ad. very (with vague intensive force)
wondyrful: wonderful
wone sb. custom, wont AS gewuna m.
wone, wonen inf. dwell, be accustomed; **woned** pt. s.; **wonynde** p.; **wonyd, woned, wont** pp. AS wunian
woneden 3 pt. pl. dwelt; cf. **wone**
wonger sb. pillow AS wongere
wonne, wonnen pp. captured, conquered AS winnan
wont pp. accustomed; cf. **wone**
wonyd pp. accustomed, wont; cf. **wone**
wonyng sb. dwelling
wonynge p. dwelling; cf. **wone**
woo sb. sorrow; me is woo] I am sorry AS wā
woo a. woeful, sad
wood, woode a. mad, insane AS wōd
woode sb. wood AS wudu m.
woodecraft: woodcraft
woodeth pr. s. goes mad; cf. **wood**
woodly: madly, insanely
woodnesse: madness
wook 3 pt. s. woke; cf. **wake**
woon sb. retreat, resource; cf. **won**
woost 2 pr. s. know; cf. **witen**
woot pr. s., pl. know; cf. **witen**
worcher: deviser < AS wyrcean
worcheth 3 pr. s. worketh; cf. **werch**
word, worde: word, saying, proverb AS word n.
word and ende for **ord and ende**: beginning and end
worldes, worldis, worldys poss. world's AS weoruld f.
worly for **worthly**: worthily
worm: snake, serpent AS wyrm m.
wormes: worms, corresponding to the wormwood in the mediæval pharmacopœia B 4152
wors: worse AS wyrs
worshipe inf. reverence < AS weorðscipe m.
worshippe s. worship, honor, re-

nown; seyn worshyppe] speak praise AS weorðscipu m.
worste: worst
worstede sb. worsted < Worthstead, town in Norfolk
wortes: herbs AS wyrt f.
worthe inf. go, become; **worth upon**] got upon AS weorðan
worthe, worthi a. worth, worthy, profitable AS weorð
worthyeste: worthiest
worthynesse: worth
woste 2 pr. s. know, realize; cf. **witen**
wot, wote pr. s. know; cf. **witen**
wounde inf. wound; **wondeth** pr. s.; **wounded, wownded** pp. AS wundian
wounde sb. wound; **woundes** pl. plagues; the X woundes of Egipte] the ten plagues sent upon the Egyptians because Pharaoh would not set free the Children of Israel; cf. Exodus vii.-xii. Du 1206 AS wund f.
wounder: wondrous; cf. **wonder**
woundis poss. pl. wounds'
woweth: wooeth AS wōgean
wowke: week AS weocu f.
wownded pp. wounded; cf. **wounde**
woxen pp. become, grown AS weaxan
wrak: wreckage AS wræc n.
wrappe inf. cover, wrap orig. uncert.
wrastelyng: wrestling-match AS wrastlian
wrastlen inf. wrestle
wrastling sb. wrestling
wrathe sb. anger AS wræððo f.
wrathed pp. made angry
wraw: full of wrath orig. uncert.
wrecche, wrechch sb. wretched creature; Y wrechch] unhappy creature that I am AS wrecca m.
wrecche a. wretched, woful
wrecchedly: miserably
wrecched pp. wretched AS wrecc
wrecchednesse, wrechednesse: low degree, misery
wreche sb. revenge AS wracu f.
wreched engendrynge of Mankynde: "De Miseria Conditionis Humanæ," a Latin prose work by Pope Innocent III, translated by Chaucer. Fragments are apparently preserved in Man of Law's Tale (Sk.) L 414
wreke inf. wreak vengence; **wrek** imp.; **wreke** pp. AS wrecan
wrekere: avenger
wrete pp. written; cf. **write**
wrethe: wreath AS wræð
wreye inf. disclose AS wrēgan
wrie inf. disclose, reveal AS wrēgan
wrien inf. turn aside AS wrigian
wrighte sb. mechanic, carpenter; **wrightes** poss. AS wyrhta m.
write inf. write; **writ** 3 pr. s.; **wroot, wrote** pt. s.; **wrete, write, writen, written, writyn** pp. AS wrītan
write, writen pp. written; cf. **write**
writhyng sb. turning AS wrīðan
writte sb. writ AS writ n.
written pp. written; cf. **write**
writyn pp. written; cf. **write**
writyng sb. writing AS wrīting
wroght pp. made, created; cf. **werche**
wroghte 3 pt. s. practiced; first he practiced, then he preached A 497; cf. **werche**
wrong 3 pt. s. wrung; cf. **wrynge**
wronge sb. wrong AS wrang
wronge ad. wrongly Du 950
wroot 3 pt. s. wrote; cf. **write**
wrooth, wroothe, wrothe a. angry; be wroothe] are enemies AS wrāð
wrought pp. made, done; born Du 90; cf. **werche**
wrye inf. hide AS wrēon
wryen inf. turn aside AS wrigian
wryng, wrynge inf. wring, wring the hands; **wrong** pt. s. AS wringan
wyd, wyde a. broad, wide, roomy, open AS wīd
wyde ad. widely E 722 AS wīde
wydewhere: far and wide
wydwe sb. widow AS widuwe
wyf, wyfe: wife, woman AS wīf n.
wyfhod: wifehood
wyflees: wifeless

wyfly: wifely, womanly
wyght: weight AS wiht
wyghte: wight, person; wyghtys pl. AS wiht
wyke: week AS weocu f.
wyl sb. will, desire AS willa, will
wyldernesse: wilderness
wyldnesse: wilderness
wyle sb. wile, deceit AS wīl f.
wylugh: willow AS welig
wymen: women
wyn: wine; wyn ape] ape's wine; wine made men lambs, apes, lions or swine, according to their temperaments H 44 AS wīn n.
wynd sb. wind AS wind m.
wyndas: windlass; cf. Icel vindās "wind-pole"
wynde inf. swathe, wind about, turn about; wynt 3 pr. s. AS windan
Wyndisore: Windsor, the king's palace Sc 43 marg.
wyndowe: window; cf. Icel vindauga "wind-eye"
wynged pp. winged
wynges: wings; cf. Dan vinge
wynke: sleep, shut the eyes AS wincian
wynne inf., pr. s. gain, get ahead of, win, conquer; wanne pt. s.; wonne, wonnen pp. AS winnan
wynnyng sb. profit
wynt 3 pr. s. windeth; cf. wynde
wynter: winter AS winter
wyped 3 pt. s. wiped AS wīpian
wys a. wise, sensible; to make it wys] make it a matter for deliberation AS wīs
wys ad. certainly ? < gewiss
wyse sb. wise, manner AS wīse
wyse pl. as sb. wise men
wysse a. wise AS wissian
wysse 2 pr. subj. guide, lead; cf. wisse
wysshe sb. wish < AS wȳscan
wyte sb. reproach AS wīte n.
wyte inf., imp. blame, reproach AS wītan
wythoute ad. without, outside AS wiðūtan
wytte: wit, wisdom, ability, mind AS witt n.
wytyn inf. know; cf. witen
wyve inf. wive, take a wife AS wīfian
wyves pl. wives

X

Xantippa: Xantippe, wife of Socrates

Y

Y: used for pers. pron. I
ya: yes, yea AS gēa
yaf pt. s. gave; cf. yeven
yate: gate AS geat n.
ybe pp. been
ybeen pp. been
ybet, ybete pp. beaten, forged; hammered into a thin foil A 979 AS bēatan
yblent pp. blinded, deceived
ybore, yboren, yborn pp. born, borne
ybounde, ybounden pp. bound
ybrend, ybrent pp. burned
ybroght pp. brought
yburyed pp. buried
ycalled pp. called
ycaried:
ycheyned pp. chained
yclad pp. clad
yclenched pp. clinched
ycleped pp. called
yclothed pp. clothed
ycome, ycomen pp. come, descended
ycorouned pp. crowned
ycorve, ycorven pp. cut A 2013
ycoupled pp. coupled, wedded
ycoyned: coined
ycrammed: crammed
ycrased pp. cracked, broken
ycristned pp. christened
ycrowned pp. crowned
ydel: idle, vain AS īdel
ydelly: vainly, to no profit
ydelnesse: idleness
ydiot: idiot OF idiot
ydolastre: idolater OF idolastre
ydole: idol OF idole
ydon, ydoo pp. done, finished
ydrawe pp. drawn, dragged, stolen
ydressed pp. arranged

ydressed pp. dressed, arranged
ydropped pp. sprinkled
ydryven pp. driven
ye sb. eye AS ēage n. Du 807
ye pron., pl. used as s. Du 1129
ye ad. yea; yea or nay] affirmative or negative AS gēa
yeddynges sb. pl. minstrel songs, ballads AS yeddung
yee: yea, verily
yeer sb. s., pl. year; yeere pl. AS gēar n.
yeldehalle sb. guild-hall; cf. Icel gildi
yelden inf. yield AS gieldan
yeldyng sb. yield
yelewe: yellow AS geolu
yelow: yellow
yelownesse: yellowness
yelpe inf. boast AS gielpan
yelwe: yellow
yeman: yeoman, an attendant from the peasant class, above the common servant orig. uncert.
yemanly: in a yeoman-like manner
yen: eyes; cf. ye
yer: year; pl.; cf. yeer
yerde: stick, rod, rule; slepy yerde] the caduceus of Mercury, the winged and serpent-entwined rod with which he conducted the souls of the departed to the lower world AS gierd f.
yerde: yard, garden AS geard m.
yere: year; yeris pl.; cf. yeer
yerne ad. eagerly, gladly AS georne
yerne in. yearn AS gyrnan
yet: yet, nevertheless, still, even AS gīt
yeven inf. give; yeve 3 pr. s.; gaf, yaf pt. s.; yeve imp., pp. AS giefan
yevinge: giving
yfalle pp. fallen
yfeere: together ME in fere
yfet pp. fetched
yfetered pp. fettered, chained
yfeyned pp. pretended, evaded
yflatered: flattered
yfolowed pp. followed
yformed pp. formed
yfostred: fostered, brought up
yfounde pp. found
yfounded pp.; founde: founded, established
yfynde inf.
yghe: eye; cf. ye
yglasyd pp. glazed
yglewed pp. glued
yglosed pp. flattered
ygo, ygoon pp. gone, devoted himself
ygraunted pp. granted
ygrave, grave pp. cut out, dug out
ygret pp. greeted
ygrounde pp. ground, sharpened
ygrounded pp. grounded, fixed
yhad pp. had
yharded pp. hardened
yhedde pp. hidden
yheere inf. hear
yhent pp. collected, taken
yhid pp. hid
yholde pp held, esteemed
yhurt pp. hurt
yif: if AS gif
yif imp. give; cf. yive
yifte: gift; cf. Icel gift
yis: yes
yit, yitte: yet AS gȳt
yive inf. give; yif imp.; yive pp. AS giefan
ykaught pp. caught; cf. cacche
ykorven pp. cut
yknowe inf. know; pp.
ykoude pp. known well
ylad pp. carried, led
ylaft pp. left
yle: isle; bareyne yle] Naxos OF isle
yleyd pp. laid
ylik a. like, alike
ylike ad. alike, equally AS gelīce
Ylioun: the citadel of Troy
ylke: same; cf. ilke
yloren pp. lost
ylyche a. of one mind, constant
ylyche ad. alike, equally AS gelīce
ylyk a. like
ylymed pp. limed, caught (as birds are)
ymaad pp. made, caused
ymages sb. pl. images to be used as charms in treating patients A 418 OF.

ymaginatyf: given to illusion or suspicion OF.
ymaginyng: considering, plotting
ymagynacioun: imagination, fancy
ymaked pp. made
ymet pp. met
ymeynd pp. mingled AS mengan
ympes: shoots AS impa
ympne: hymn OF hymne
ynche: inch AS ynce
Ynde: India
ynde a. indigo, blue OF inde
ynly: inwardly, deeply
ynogh, ynough: enough AS genōh
ynowe: enough
yok: yoke AS geoc n.
yolle 3 pr. pl. cry aloud; **yolleden** pt. pl. AS gyllan
yond: yonder AS geond
yong, yonge: young AS geong
yoore, yore: formerly, of old, from a long time past; yore ago] long ago AS gēara
York, My Lady of: daughter of K. Pedro of Spain
youlyng sb. outcry
youre, youres: yours
yourselven: yourself
youth, youthe: youth, period of youth AS geoguð, iugoþ f.
yow, yowe: you, to you
yowthe: youth
ypayed pp. paid
Ypermistra: Hypermnestra saved her husband, Lino, from death
yplesed pp. pleased
Ypocras: Hippocrates, celebrated Greek physician of the time of Socrates; the greatest of ancient physicians Du 571
ypocras: a sweet wine, spiced and put through a strainer (Hippocrates' sleeve, so-called) C 306
ypocrisye: hypocrisy OF hypocrisie
ypocryte: hypocrite
Ypolita: Hippolyta, queen of the Amazons, wife of Theseus
Ypomedon: Hippomedon, one of the Seven against Thebes
Ypotys: Ypotis is a Middle English poem, religious rather than romantic
yprayed pp. invited
Ypres: city in Flanders, famous for its cloth
y-preved pp. proved
ypunysshed pp. punished
ypurfiled pp. edged with fur
yquit pp. acquitted
yraft pp. seized
yre: ire, anger OF ire
yreke pp. raked together, as the dying embers in the ashes
yrekened pp. counted
yrent pp. torn
yronne pp. run, run together, clustered
yryn: iron AS īren
ysayd, ysayede pp. said
yscalded pp. scalded
yse, ysee inf. see; **ysene** pp.
ysene pp. visible
ysent pp. sent
yserved pp. served, treated
yset pp. set, placed, appointed
yseyled pp. sailed
yshapen pp. shaped, formed
yshave pp. shaved
yshette pp. shut
yshewed pp. shown
yshorn pp. shorn
yshryve, ysshryven pp. shriven
Ysiphile: Hypsipyle, queen of Lemnos, wedded to and deserted by Jason
yslawe pp. slain
yslayn pp. slain
ysoghte pp. sought
ysongen pp. sung
ysowe pp. sown
ysprad pp. spread
yspreynd pp. sprinkled
ystiked pp. thrust, stabbed
ystonge pp. stung
ystorve pp. dead
ystrawed pp. strewn
ystynt pp. ended
yswonke pp. labored
yswore pp. sworn F 325
ysworn pp. sworn A 1132
Ytaille: Italy
ytake pp. taken
ytaught pp. taught, trained
yteyd pp. tied
ythonked pp. thanked
ythrowe pp. cast out
ytoold pp. told

yturned pp. turned
yve: ivy; herb yve] ground pine AS ifig
yvel a. evil AS yfel
yvele ad. evil; me list ful yvele] it does not please me
yvory, yvoyre: ivory OF ivoire
yvoyded pp. removed
ywarned pp. warned
ywedded pp. married
ywis: certainly, truly ME gewiss
ywoundid pp. wounded
ywrien pp. hidden
ywriten pp. written
ywroght pp. wrought
ywrye pp. covered
ywympled pp. covered with a wimple
ywys: truly

Z

Zanzis: Zeuxis, Greek painter mentioned by Cicero
Zephirus: Zephyrus, the gentle west wind

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